Bombs Do Not Decide

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Iowa Revisited

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'Fortune,' Trotsky and Mexico

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GRANVILLE HICKS

Flatfoot

A Short Story

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CHRISTINA STEAD

Cartoons by Gropper, Ellis, Richter, Hilton, Del, and Ajay

ON THE COVER

André Malraux

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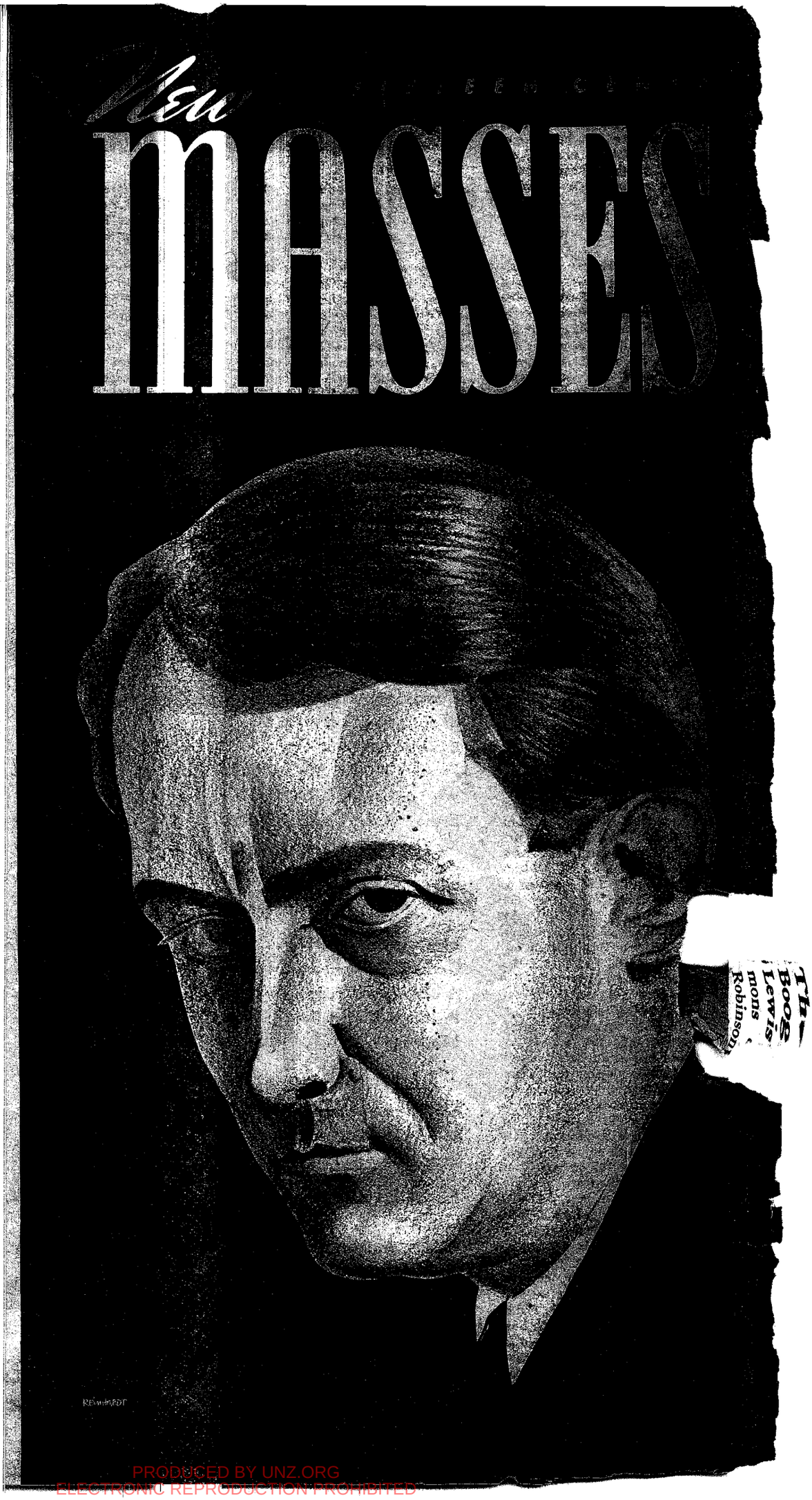
NOV. 15, 1938

New MASSES



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Between Ourselves

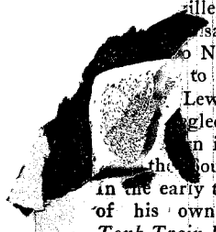
AN ARTICLE by John Strachey is scheduled for next week's issue under the title "Is there Hope in America?" The question mark, of course, arises from Strachey's experiences at Ellis Island, and the article represents the author's reflections on his current book, published by Modern Age, *Hope in America.*

Next week NEW MASSES will present an analysis of the elections by Earl Browder.

The absence of Robert Forsythe's weekly page from this and last week's issues of NEW MASSES is due to the fact that he has been severely ill. He is now convalescing, and his contributions will, we hope, be resumed within the next several weeks.

An opportunity for readers and friends of NEW MASSES to solve some of their Christmas shopping problems and at the same time help the magazine will be afforded by our "We Like America" art show and sale, which will offer the best works of our most outstanding American artists at moderate prices. Over one hundred paintings, all in several media, sculpture, and prints will be on sale. At the formal opening on Sunday evening, November 13, 8 p.m., the Phyl-Sym Quartet will play. The exhibit and sale will continue for two weeks —through November 27. For further details see the advertisement on page 30 of this issue.

One of the most stimulating Negro musical forms which will be heard at NEW MASSES' December 23 concert at Carnegie Hall is the style of piano playing called "Boogie-woogie." It is characterized by its tremendous volume and percussive power, requiring a masterful left-hand technique in the player. The Boogie-woogie piano style came out of the poverty of the American Negro who could not afford an orchestra on his festive occasions. One player of a battered piano had to furnish the drive of a jazz orchestra. [illegible] atest living masters of the [illegible] oogie style, Meade ("Lux") Louisville, Ky., Albert Am- Chicago, Bob Johnson of [illegible] ille, Miss., and Pete John- [illegible] sas City, Mo., are being [illegible] o New York for the "From [illegible] to Swing" concert.



Lewis' life story is typical [illegible] glect of these native ge- [illegible] n in Florida, he wandered [illegible] th[illegible] outh, playing the piano. In the early twenties he recorded one of his own compositions, *Honky-Tonk Train Blues,* for a cheap-record company. Through the years this single recording came to be a classic of jazz to a handful of American and European enthusiasts. But no one knew what had become of Lewis. Five years ago John Hammond, who is producing NEW MASSES' concert, started to look for Lewis. Hammond asked musicians everywhere, without success. Finally, last year, he discovered the Boogie-woogie master washing cars in a Chicago South Side garage. Hammond brought him to New York where he arranged to record four sides for English Parlaphone, because no American phonograph company would take a chance on such records selling. These records, *Honky-Tonk Train Blues, Yancey Special, Whistling Blues,* and *Celeste Blues,* the last performed on an antique celeste, became sensations in Europe.

It was not until this year that the records were made for American consumption. Again Lewis dropped into obscurity because there was no appreciation in America for his talents. He went back to Chicago where he is now working in a garage. Lewis' return to New York for NEW MASSES' concert will bring him before an audience whose interest may finally break the jinx for this talented musician. Reservations are now being taken at this office for the evening of American Negro music, "From Spirituals to Swing," December 23, at Carnegie Hall.

Richard Wright will speak on "Negro Culture in America" under the auspices of the New World Bookshop Forum, in association with the National Negro Congress, in Philadelphia, November 22. There will also be music by the E. Gilbert Anderson Symphony. The meeting is at 8 p.m., O. V. Catto Lodge Auditorium, Sixteenth and Fitzwater Sts.

May we direct your attention to our back-cover ad, in which we announce a new part-payment plan for a year's subscription to NEW MASSES? This is not to be confused with previous $1 trial subscriptions, which we have discontinued because of its costliness to us.

THIS WEEK

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Who's Who

ILYA EHRENBOURG, one of the most outstanding Soviet news correspondents, has for the past two years represented *Izvestia* in Spain. His writings have appeared frequently in NEW MASSES. The article in this issue was translated by James and Virginia Victor of the *People's World.* . . . Duncan Cassidy, as his article makes plain, is an Iowa editor. . . . Margaret Bailey is Florida representative of the International Labor Defense. . . . Osro Mist has contributed a number of articles to NEW MASSES. . . . Marc Frank is NEW MASSES correspondent in Mexico. . . . Christina Stead is a well known novelist. . . . John Stuart collaborated with Bruce Minton in writing *Men Who Lead Labor.* . . . Wallingford Riegger is an outstanding composer of modern music. . . . Several book reviews by Milton Meltzer have been published in NEW MASSES. . . . Harlan Crippen's poetry has been printed in NEW MASSES, the *Windsor Quarterly,* and *Midwest.* He is writing a biography of Sen. R[illegible]. Pettigrew, which also will be a [illegible]ory of the Populist movement.

William Gropper asks us to share credit for his cartoon on page 5 with Robert Minor, who is responsible for the idea. Bob Minor, America's finest political artist some years back, put aside his crayons for the organizational and journalistic activities that brought him to the position of political leadership he holds today.

Flashbacks

Nov. 14, 1831: Hegel, father of the dialectical method in philosophy, died. . . . Nov. 15, 1777: The Continental Congress adopted the first working agreement for cooperation among the rebel American colonies and called it the Articles of Confederation. . . . Nov. 11, 1886: Haymarket martyrs executed. . . . Nov. 11, 1918: The imperialism of the Allies prevailed for the time being over the imperialism of the Central Powers. . . . Nov. 11, 1919: American Legionnaires, bent on running IWW's out of Centralia, Wash., got the worst of a shooting fray which they provoked and in which they took part. . . . Nov. 16, 1920: General Wrangel's White Russian Army was finally driven from Crimea by the Bolsheviks. . . . Nov. 16, 1931: Theodore Dreiser and other writers investigating conditions in the now unionized Harlan County, Kentucky, mines was indicted on criminal-syndicalism charges. . . . Nov. 16, 1933: The United States, sixteen years after the Russian Revolution, finally recognized the USSR.

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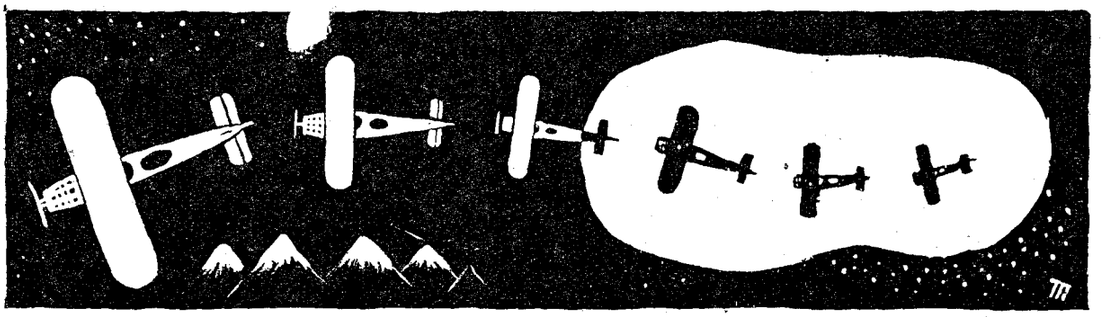

Charles Martin

Bombs Do Not Decide

Spain Killed the Legend of Air Supremacy

ILYA EHRENBOURG

THE other day Hitler spoke in Nuremberg:

"Germans! You now have the right to hold up your heads. . . ."

The other day I heard the drone of motors and quickly raised my head. Eight German planes were bombing Barcelona for the ninety-ninth time.

Italy and Germany long ago decided upon conquering Spain from the air. This was supposed to be the quickest, most "diplomatic," and most economical way. Italian infantry did not appear in Spain until the end of December 1936. But as early as August 1936, just a few weeks after the beginning of the fascist rebellion, one of Italy's bombers had to make a forced landing in Algiers and thereby served the first notice to the world that Italy was sending its aviation forces to the Spanish fascist front. Shortly thereafter, in September 1936, I reported the appearance of German bombers over Aragonian villages.

Two years have passed since then. The members of the "Non-Intervention" Committee have aged a little. But Spain is still not conquered. I have never been present at any session of this London committee. For me, the work of fascist aviation is not a debatable question. It is a daily nuisance. I therefore think it is time to tell the world about the forces, activities, and achievements of this aviation.

During the first year of the war, Germany used to ship its planes by sea. There were assembly plants in Seville, Palencia, and Burgos. Now the German planes fly here across Italy and sometimes even across France. (Of course, they do not as yet linger over Paris.) Germany's air fleet in Spain is called "the Condor Legion." It is hard to explain the need of this pseudonym—whether it is done out of respect to the London committee or from sheer love of the romantic. The General Staff of Germany's aviation forces is in Salamanca. General Pheidt is in charge. The forces are divided into three squadrons, commanded respectively by Majors Henschels, Hernet, and Meinert. Germany has about 140 airships in Spain right now. During recent battles on the Ebro front, Germany was represented by twenty-five Messerschmidts, thirty Heinkels (III) and fifteen Dornier ships. There were also quite a few "Heinkel 59's." The old Junker ships now serve only for rearguard communication and once in a while they are used in bombing small, defenseless villages. All German planes are manned exclusively by Germans. The whole technical personnel, even the airport guards, are Germans.

Sometimes we get an opportunity to witness the combined work of the "allies," when the German Messerschmidts cover up the activities of the Italian bombers. Usually, however, Italians and Germans "work" different sectors of the country. The Italians seem to prefer the seacoast. They bomb the cities of Catalonia and Levant. But, of course, there are no monopoly rights on that. On September 16, Barcelona was bombed by fifteen German twin-motor planes.

The Italian aviation forces in Spain are quantitatively stronger, but in quality weaker than the Germans. Whenever the Italians met the republican fast "wasps," their "Fiat 32" invariably met defeat. Suffice it to say that within three months' time the republicans brought down sixty-nine Fiats. The Italians also have a new model—the "Fiat 50." The first of these models was brought down by the republicans on the very first day of its appearance here. There are six squadrons of Italian "Savoia" bombers, stationed at Majorca. Altogether, Italy has about 270 airships in Spain. General Barnasconi is in command of the Italian aviation forces in Spain. He is assisted by Colonel Castilleni. Only Italians fly the Italian planes. The Italians tried to get Spanish fascists to fly some old Italian "crates," but as soon as they appeared in Estremadura, the republicans brought down or captured most of them and that ended the Spanish "Nationalist Aviation."

A single visit to Barcelona, where all the captured fascist pilots are kept, will show anybody what the "air population" in fascist Spain really consists of. There are twenty Germans, fifty Italians, two Portuguese, and one Spaniard. As human beings, they are defectives: ignoramuses, fanatics, or robots. One should not, however, think that the fascists sent their inferior men to Spain. From a technical point of view, they are the cream of fascist aviation. This spring, the republicans captured a German pilot, famous for his South American flights. Most of them appear to be well educated and technically splendidly trained.

The Messerschmidts, Heinkels, and Fiat 50's are the very best of German and Italian planes. We have here a bloody rehearsal of the "aerial war" which, the fascists think, must conquer Europe. Of course, the Italian base at Majorca and the German airports near the French border lines have other aims, a great deal broader than the mere destruction of Spain's independence.

The fascists think that the destruction of open, defenseless cities is essential for the conquest of any given country. We find ruins in the heart of Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia. Priceless treasures of the past have been ruth-

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lessly destroyed. Dozens of cities were badly crippled—Tarragona, Figueras, Lérida, Cartagena, Albacete, Alicante, Alcala, Falceta, Almería. Some cities were utterly destroyed, like Guernica, Posablanca, Pules, Tortosa. Thousands of civilians were killed.

I will not now go into any description of the terrible scenes I have witnessed. I will just put down some dry, historic figures:

Oct. 30, 1936: Germans bomb Madrid	425	victims
Jan. 12, 1937: Italians bomb Malaga	410	"
April 1937: Fascists bomb Durango four times	1,270	"
April 26, 1937: Guernica bombed	2,545	"
October 1937: Canquez de Oniz bombed	612	"
January 1938: Twenty-one fascist bombardments of Barcelona	627	"
March 17, 1938: Eleven bombardments of Barcelona in one day	2,113	"
March 4, 1938: Alcaniz bombed	408	"
March 8, 1938: Puebla de Ijar bombed	267	"
May 25, 1938: Alicante bombed	328	"
May 31, 1938: Granoliers bombed	506	"

Sept. 16, 1938, fifteen German planes bombed Barcelona. One of the bombs hit a fish market. Hundreds of women died. This is just a typical "standard" air attack. I have quoted only the "successful" fascist attacks. Altogether, the fascist aviation forces delivered 1,108 aerial attacks against peaceable Spanish cities. During the past six months alone, the Italians and Germans attacked 624 times.

The International Committee for Aid to Spanish Children reports nine thousand children killed and crippled by the Italians and Germans. It is awful to write these figures. Here statistics border upon insanity.

At first glance it would seem that the fascists have achieved fairly "successful" results. But a comparison of their original plans, ideas, etc., with the results actually achieved will show that the fascists have *suffered a defeat.* The fascists looked upon the destruction of open cities as a strategic move. They expected to terrorize the Spanish people into capitulation. But the Spanish people are not like Chamberlain. On the contrary—the threats only strengthened their will to resist. The 1,108 aerial attacks have given Spain not only graves and ruins. They helped transform this peaceful and careless country into a wall of grimly determined fighters. The spirit of the Ebro army was born amid the smoking ruins from which were removed the bodies of the dead children.

At the front, fascist aviation did not achieve any better results. For a long time the Spanish army was composed of young, inexperienced, untrained and undisciplined youth. Early in the war the militia used to suffer with "aviaphobia." They used to run away from airplanes. Even in the spring of this year there were instances when young soldiers gave up their positions after a series of aerial bombardments. In reality, however, aviation (in actual warfare) proved to be far less deadly than other forms of armament. Aviation holds last place in the number of mortalities—far behind machine guns, light and heavy artillery. Fear of the might of aviation was a myth and it took a long time for this myth to die.

The republican army learned by its failures and mistakes. The May attacks at Balaguera conducted by the republican army failed because they were met with terrific machine-gun and artillery resistance. But this failure also taught the republicans a valuable lesson. The republicans have learned that the quantitative superiority of aerial forces does not mean victory and that air supremacy does not mean land supremacy.

The legend of the "might" of aviation was finally killed on the Ebro front. During the early part of the operation, fascist aviation disregarded republican infantry. They were too busy destroying bridges. Of course, it did slow up the movement of artillery, but did nothing to prevent republican counter-attacks and advancement.

History never recorded anything more intensive than the fascist air attacks upon the republican mountain positions. But the republicans held and retained all territory captured in July. The number of actual victims of these aerial attacks is comparatively insignificant.

Quantitatively the republican aviation is much weaker than that of the fascists. Nevertheless, during three months recently the republicans brought down ninety-eight enemy planes. The courage of the republican flyers is remarkable. We have witnessed many aerial combats where the republicans have attacked forces twice as numerous as their own. The German pilots undoubtedly are better trained. But courage cannot be taught, nor is it anything inborn. The Spanish are superior in inner discipline, consciousness, and depth of conviction. Love for their fatherland and love for freedom inspired the Ebro fighters and the republican flyers.

I remember a republican flyer, only eighteen years old. He had just brought down his sixteenth plane. Smilingly he said:

"Why do they fly over our land?"

Here is the passion—here is the burning hatred of all Spain against the invading fascists.

Spain's anti-aircraft defense is only beginning to grow and develop. It was these guns which protected so well the army crossing the Ebro. The fascist flyers are now forced to stay fifteen thousand feet above the ground.

Aviation helped the fascists to occupy the poorly armed and disorganized North of Spain. Aviation did help the fascists early in the war, while they dealt with untrained amateurs.

The fascist countries are bluffing:

"Our aviation is almighty. We can wipe Paris and London off the face of the earth. What is the Maginot Line for us? We have hundreds upon hundreds of planes. With the aid of aviation we will quickly win any war."

But the shadows of Heinkels and Savoias no longer can frighten even the old Spanish women. These shadows can frighten only some of Europe's "leaders."

I remember one old lady in Madrid. This was in the Quatro Caminos district, which suffered heavily from aerial attacks. The old lady was quietly knitting. She sat on a folding chair amid the ruins.

"Why did you not evacuate?"

"We have to show them our strength," was her reply.

If only this Madrid old lady could be the premier of France!

The Spanish war has destroyed many myths and killed many legends. The myth of the "iron guards" of Rome exploded at Guadalajara. The legend of the "invincible might" of fascist aviation died in the mountains near Ebro.

To Those Who Ask for S[illegible]s

Thoughts of Germany: 1[illegible]

Songs grow in sunlight
and soft rain falling;
in peace
and in the moon's
passing gentle hand
across the sleeping fields.
They come with freedom;
the full yield of harvest
stored safely in the crib,
the full table,
the wedding bed,
the four walls
strong and sure.

The wounded heart
is scabbed with silence now:
the silence of war,
heavy and threatening,
between battles;
the silence
when guns reload
and some die
only sighing at the thrust.

This time has set
a flaw within our throats
that strangles music
and holds the clotted notes unborn.
Singing is a quality
not found in thunder
and the ceaseless wind
stripping the dying trees
and fire raging over the wastelands.
In the time of blood
there are no songs
for all the singers
have a bullet
heavy in the heart.
Only a few who whisper
and act the cautious part
yet live to pass the legend
of the singing city
and the shining plain.

HARLAN CRIPPEN

★ ★ ★

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William Gropper

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Iowa Revisited

A Newspaper Editor Returns After Ten Years

DUNCAN CASSIDY

WHEN Iowa was enjoying national recognition as the authentic exponent of corn-hog culture and the infant *New Yorker* magazine was heralded as a publication unsuited to "the Old Lady from Dubuque," I was editor of a newspaper in one of the river cities. I recorded my impressions of the Iowa press in an article which was published in the *New Republic* of Nov. 28, 1928. After more than a decade I returned to the same city, again as a newspaper editor.

Momentous changes had occurred during my absence. Crosses of the Ku Klux Klan had burned out, not to be relighted. Bootleggers had been demoted from their positions as up-and-coming citizens. Former Senator Brookhart had retired from his job as darling hell-raiser for agriculture to the New Deal payroll. The politics of protest had been succeeded by discussion of AAA, the slaughter of little pigs, soil conservation, and the ever normal granary.

In my old home, where most citizens had seemed indifferent to social and economic problems, a labor forum directed by the professor of economics in a local college was in successful operation, and the public librarian reported that books on economics and similar subjects were circulating like best-sellers. On the surface, at least, the state gave evidence of having entered an era of unexpected liberalism. Could it be that these surface indications represented an enduring condition of political and social idealism?

The most hopeful idealist probably will concede that permanent social and political progressiveness must be predicated, first, on extensive modification of the average citizen's reverence for "property rights" and the mysteries of business; and, second, on the growth of a social conscience and political philosophy favorable to radical constitutional amendments. I soon discovered that nothing approaching such a mental and spiritual revolution had taken place.

During my first sojourn in the state the publisher by whom I was employed had been willing to experiment in liberal journalism. For a time the paper engaged in exhilarating conflict with Ku Kluxers, Babbitts, Prohibitionists, and standpatters. Journalism of this kind was an anomaly in Iowa and would have failed immediately except for a local island of militant Democracy in the Republican sea, which is explained by settlement of the region by Irish and other immigrants imbued with the European spirit of '48.

Two newspapers were in the field. Our competitor was Republican but our paper had behind it a long Democratic tradition. Many citizens recalled the era of forthright personal journalism and extended cordial welcome to its revival even though in a bit more subdued form.

The shift of newspapers from personal to business-office journalism has been amply discussed. Of more immediate interest is the increased conservatism of publishers which has accompanied their increased stake in the current system. Back in the twenties the memory of personal journalism was still fresh enough to influence decisions of my employer, but he was even then yielding to the pressure of new conditions. When he moved into an imposing residence in the exclusive neighborhood occupied by "economic royalists" — a phrase still a dozen years in the future—my experiment came to an end.

When I returned to this newspaper, altered conditions encouraged me to believe that the experiment might be resumed successfully. By this time my old paper had swallowed up its Republican competitor. The publisher enjoyed a monopoly in his field and was firmly established socially and financially. His strengthened position seemed to guarantee an independence which had been more tenuous under former conditions. In addition, the "Roosevelt revolution," so inspiriting to liberals, had swept over the state. With the shock troops of conservatism in a condition apparently bordering on hopeless defeat and befuddlement, it seemed reasonable to expect that liberal journalism might this time escape serious interference. But it was soon emphatically revealed to me that my optimism was founded entirely on wishful thinking.

First, complaints were directed at lack of recognition of conservative opinion in the editorial page; and I appreciated their justice. When a newspaper becomes the sole medium of printed news and opinion in its more or less exclusive circulation area the editor must acknowledge the need for supplying mental pabulum agreeable to conflicting beliefs. I attempted to meet this situation by the use of editorial-page features favorable to the conservative viewpoint and by encouraging contributions from conservatives to the Letter Box. The concession was far from satisfying to my critics. Members of the Chamber of Commerce, important advertisers, and other influential representatives of urban respectability would be satisfied with nothing less than root-and-branch extirpation of liberal ideas. Dear freedom of the press!

In this group, prestige imitation is the most important psychological factor in influencing the opinions of members. The small-town business man, banker, or industrialist almost invariably fashions his opinions on the pattern supplied by some national figure or group of figures in the world of big business. The little fellow identifies his interests and problems with those of the big fellows, and their pronouncements have oracular finality for their bush-league imitator. And the speed and thoroughness with which a rising enterpriser is assimilated by his group is surprising. The lower the economic status from which he sprang the more uncompromising his loyalty to the group pattern after he arrives. He is never at a loss to know what constitutes disloyalty, as he is subjected to a constant stream of propaganda originating mostly in the publicity bureaus of national organizations and big corporations.

Accordingly, many important local enterprisers rose in arms when their national leaders were criticized in my editorial columns. At social gatherings my employer was greeted with inquiries about his "Bolshevist" editor. "Bolshevist," in the Midwest, is a term of opprobrium which has no relation whatever to its original meaning. It is applied without discrimination to all persons espousing policies or ideas distasteful to the "best people," irrespective of the social or political implications of the policies or ideas.

The program which won the title for me was of the mildest kind. I supported Roosevelt with reservations; suggested gently that all might not be wholly for the best in this best of all possible worlds; and that it might be worth considering whether a social organization which exists almost exclusively for the promotion of the acquisitive processes does not sometimes militate against social justice and the spiritual graces. There was nothing Marxian in my program and I suspect that every major proposition I advanced could have been supported morally by biblical thority. Yet, in the hub of the Bible belt program was branded as subversive and American.

Apparently the buffetings of the depre and the sweep of the New Deal, instea destroying the morale of the business group has made them more class-conscious and more sensitive to criticism than they were back in the twenties. They are more aggressively opposed than ever to any line of thought which casts doubt on the workability of the so-called competitive profit system, although it has become largely non-competitive.

The key to this attitude is reverence for the principle of private profit. Scarcely any distinction is made between intangible wealth and useful property produced by personal expenditure of energy. A vested interest is as sacred, nay, more sacred than a house or farm, and public interests are eclipsed by the right of the rentier to his sources of income.

The enterpriser clings to this principle even in cases where it runs counter to his personal advantage. For example, the city where I lived was served by toll bridges which

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were serious trade barriers, yet the Chamber of Commerce could not be induced to undertake a campaign for free bridges. I heard the secretary of the chamber assert that there was no especial need for them. The prevalent, though not unanimous, feeling among members was that since investors had been fortunate or foresighted enough to obtain bridge stock it wouldn't be cricket to deprive them of their juicy profits even if the deprivation would admittedly promote the general welfare. Similarly, newspaper publishers who muffed the opportunity to obtain broadcasting licenses, and stand in deadly fear of radio advertising competition, refuse nevertheless to advocate government control of radio.

Lest it should be supposed that conditions I have described are not general or that my description of them is biased, I will cite briefly a crusade of the Cedar Rapids *Gazette* which is of public record and can be verified by the curious. The crusade was directed against the Rugg course in social science which was being used in the public schools of that city as supplementary reading. The editor of the *Gazette* began to preach the crusade after his children returned home from school and asked why "some people have to live in such terrible houses." On further inquiry the editor learned that his children had been taught that many people do not earn enough money to maintain decent living standards.

To the editor of the *Gazette* this effort to inculcate a social viewpoint in students was "Bolshevistic" and thoroughly un-American. Teachers responsible for introducing the treasonable literature were, like Socrates, suspected of atheism and of corrupting the youth of the city. The issue was carried into the school-board election, the *Gazette* standing squarely on a platform to "employ educators who serve their employers as those employers want to be served."

While candidates supported by the *Gazette* were not victorious, the crusade was successful to the extent that the Rugg course in social science was kicked out of the public schools. Cedar Rapids children were preserved from all doubts as to the perfect functioning of the "American system."

The fate of liberal journalism could not long remain in doubt in such an atmosphere. The second experiment covered a period approximately half as long as the first and wound up suddenly when the local utilities company jerked out its advertising in retaliation for editorial advocacy of the Wheeler-Rayburn bill to eliminate unnecessary holding companies. From a circulation standpoint the experiment was a success but that did not compensate for disloyalty to the group.

In the twenties the press of the state was merely in the pollywog stage of economic royalism. Within a decade it had joined the chorus of mature batrachians. Publishers are now the authoritative spokesmen for enterprisers and in small cities are head and front of the system. They have a virtual monopoly in their field and often control the local broadcasting station as well. They are among the most active members of chambers of commerce and a potent force in municipal government. I knew a publisher who suppressed the popular pastime of bingo, through the police department, because a weekly shopping guide was getting all of the bingo advertising.

Believe It or Not

★

Turpentine and Terror

THE Grand Jury of Perry, Fla., invited me to attend their sessions investigating the lynching of Odis Price, Negro. They wired me when indignant protests from all over the state became a bother. I could tell them everything they already know. They could convict at least ten men. Yes, I could give them the names of the people I talked with and they could lynch them too.

On the afternoon of August 9, Odis Price, twenty-two years old, married, living at the Huxford turpentine camp nine miles from Perry, went to fill his bucket at the well he shared with a white family, the Outlers. Mrs. Verde Outler was in her yard, partially dressed. She looked up, screamed, and reached for her shotgun. Odis Price fled, dropping his bucket. That night he was dead, his throat cut, his body riddled with bullets.

"That warn't no lynchin'," said the local newspaper editor, "It was a nigger killin' and not news for the paper."

The local Methodist minister said: "It would do no good to publicize the story. The nigrah insulted a white woman. The men at the camp took care of him. He was killed."

It took strategy to interview local authorities. Although it was 3 o'clock in the afternoon of a weekday, sheriff, coroner, undertaker, and state's attorney—all were out. The

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Grand Jury would like to know the people who did talk to me. They would like to know who directed me to Mrs. Price's home out at the camp. Of one thing they can be sure. I got a minimum of information from the courthouse. No one came back to his office on the first day, and no one was around all during the morning of the second day.

I finally saw the sheriff but he knew nothing. He was out of town when it happened. No, the body wasn't riddled with bullets—just one bullet hole in the back of the neck. I told him this didn't check with the coroner's verdict, and found out later I was correct. Had any investigation been made? The sheriff said no, why? I said that's what the International Labor Defense wants to know: why? The sheriff walked away.

The county judge, who finally admitted he had acted as coroner *ex officio,* knew even less. He knew it had happened at the camp, that the camp was inaccessible, but could not say if that would indicate the white workers at the camp might be responsible. "Why are you asking all these questions? Who are you anyway?" he asked. He didn't like the sound of International Labor Defense, and would say no more. The undertaker and state's attorney were still out. I stayed around, obtained further proof of the lynching, further testimony that the throat was cut and that the body of Odis Price had been shot through with bullets.

In conversation with me Sheriff Wilson of Taylor County denied that Odis Price had been under arrest at the time of his death. However, forced by protests to report on the lynching to the governor, the sheriff now admits that *Odis Price was in the custody of a deputy sheriff* "and the two were on the way back to Perry. Before reaching the hard road the dirt road was blocked by cars and a group of white men were there. Upon stopping his car the doors were opened and by force the Negro Odis Price was taken from him. Immediately afterward the deputy was ordered to proceed and the road was cleared for that purpose." (Quoting from the report of S. L. Wilson, sheriff of Taylor County, made to the governor, Oct. 6, 1938.)

There is no indication in this report that the deputy made attempts to obtain license numbers of the cars or sought to protect by force the safety of his prisoner. This, and the fact that the sheriff denied positively that Price was under arrest make the lynching that much more vicious, showing police participation in the crime.

Law enforcement in Taylor County supports and is supported by operators of lumber mills, owners of turpentine camps. Should I have gone to the Grand Jury with evidence I obtained in two days—evidence that the sheriff could not get in six weeks? It would be useless. Perry could have become an example for the whole South. Immediate investigation on August 10, prosecution of the guilty instead of strict silence and no inquiry, would have given the county prestige not only in this state but throughout the nation.—MARGARET BAILEY.

Bandwagon Forecasts

The American Institute of Private Opinion

OSRO MIST

DR. GEORGE GALLUP, director of the American Institute of Public Opinion and present "straw vote" king, did not precede me. I preceded Dr. Gallup. You may recall that the *Literary Digest* preceded us both. Then came the Landon-Roosevelt poll by the *Digest,* when most of the postcards for the poll got lost on Park Avenue. The *Digest* gave up the ghost, leaving the field to Dr. Gallup and myself.

Dr. Gallup's poll, or "survey," is published in sixty-seven newspapers throughout the country. It is almost as popular as the horse-race charts. Gallup has announced upon the authority of his innumerable investigators that the leading ten candidates for the Democratic nomination for President in 1940 are, in the order named: Garner, Farley, Hull, McNutt, Earle, Ambassador Kennedy, Wallace, Lehman, and Barkley.

I like Dr. Gallup very much and it is nothing either here or there when I relate my experiences that antedated the American Institute of Public Opinion by many years. This was also long before the birth of that other modern, scientific body, the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, Inc. The latter has much to say about "the bandwagon device" as a method of propaganda. It is the old gag of getting people to "follow the crowd." I don't think many of us are dumb about this angle of the poll business, either.

I was editor of a Democratic weekly newspaper in a Midwestern state, as a very young man, when the *Digest* poll was in its heyday. The possibilities of this "poll" idea appealed to me, as it must have to many other young men who were running Democratic newspapers in Republican counties. The official county printing often meant the difference between life and death for a small county weekly. What chance was there for a Democratic newspaper to get the printing in a strong Republican county? Probably the only chance was to conduct a private election of county officials. If the *Digest* could do this for President, why couldn't my newspaper do it for the county? I was the only editorial worker on the paper, so naturally I was the "investigator." I took to the streets with my "poll." I tabulated the choices of many people on the streets, but under such circumstances there was a tendency to talk to some people and to omit others. I was aware of this tendency, but there was nothing I could do about it. But the poll amazed even me. It revealed that a local Democratic landslide was impending. I spread these "facts" across the front page of the next issue of the paper.

I am not the best speller in the world and I was doing all the proofreading on the newspaper. The banner head read: PEOPLE PICK DEMOCRATS IN POLE. Throughout the story I talked not about the "poll" but about the "pole."

The editor of the opposition, Republican paper had me just where he wanted me. He went to town on my "pole" in a most personal manner. For a few days I feared that I might be laughed out of the county. I hid out when people came to the newspaper office to see me. But the opposition also made a mistake. The rival editor attacked me as a poor speller and therefore an ignoramus. It didn't occur to him that a great many people who refuse to regard themselves as ignoramuses are poor spellers. The people turned on the perfect speller and for the first time voted into office a Democratic slate.

Now there will be some followers of the "bandwagon" theory who will say that the "straw vote" accomplished the victory. They will tell you that the average person who visits a horse track, not knowing much about the entries, will support the favorite.

As director of my own "survey," the American Institute of Private Opinion, I am willing to admit that the decisive matter in these polls is: first, the investigator; second, the person whom the investigator investigates. Is Roosevelt's popularity increasing? Regardless of what Dr. Gallup reports, it goes without saying that if a young woman investigator with double dimples came up to a gentleman and asked him, with a wave of both dimples, "Don't you think Franklin is much nicer now than he was in 1936?" the answer would be in the affirmative. Likewise, if an investigator without dimples asked him, while he was shaving, "Do you approve of the Roosevelt 'purge' and 'threat to American independence'?" he would say, "No!"

As for the American Institute of Private Opinion, which the writer dominates, I have no investigator except myself. If, as I found out, I could not trust myself to be impartial, how could I trust just any investigator? The answer to this question provides the basis for the accuracy of the American Institute of Private Opinion. I have gone back to the old reliable horsetrack system, where the handicapper goes out at dawn to see the entries perform, clocks them, takes into account their past performances, their owners, their jockeys, their trainers, and then, and only then, gives his rating.

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Mischa Richter

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The Election Results

AS WE GO to press, one day after the election, the reports from various parts of the country are still too incomplete to permit a detailed analysis. Two facts, however, stand out above all others: the New Deal gained notable victories in New York and California (among others of lesser importance), and it suffered a number of serious setbacks. The gains made by the Republicans in the next Congress seem to have been somewhat greater than expected, particularly in the Senate, where at this writing they appear to have captured from seven to ten additional seats. And they have also won a larger number of governorships than had been predicted. Especially heavy is the loss of such states as Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

It would be foolhardy to deny that the forces of reaction have made important advances in this election, though they have by no means gained control nationally. But it would be equally foolhardy to conclude that the American people are wearying of the New Deal and demanding more conservative policies. The recent survey by *Fortune* magazine showed that President Roosevelt's popularity is greater now than it was just before the landslide two years ago. It revealed, furthermore, that within the past three months popular support of specific New Deal policies had increased. Moreover, the Republicans themselves in several states paid the greatest tribute to the strength of New Deal sentiment by donning the liberal sheepskin and attempting to appropriate New Deal objectives as their own. Rather must the reasons for the Republican victories be sought in two other factors: inadequacies in the New Deal program, particularly as it affects the farmers and urban middle classes, and insufficient unity and organization within the labor and liberal camp.

The results in New York and California demonstrate what progressive organization can do. In both these states there is a powerful, militant trade-union movement. And in both, labor has played an independent political role and has pursued a policy of collaborating with all liberal middle-class elements. It should be noted that without the votes of the American Labor Party, supported by the Communists, Governor Lehman could not have won in New York. And perhaps it might also not be amiss to draw certain conclusions from the fact that New York and California happen to be the two states where the Communist Party has its greatest strength.

The election of Culbert Olson as governor of California and Sheridan Downey as United States senator marks the culmination of a difficult uphill battle that began in 1934 with the great strike movement and with Upton Sinclair's campaign for the governorship. It is significant that both Olson and Downey were leaders of Sinclair's Epic movement, and both have been outstanding champions of liberal causes. California, for so many years the happy hunting ground of political reaction and strikebreaking terror, now at long last has been won for democracy, decency, and progress. And one of the happiest men in the entire nation is Prisoner No. 31921—Tom Mooney, who fought for Olson's election and now looks to him for that pardon which is more than twenty-two years overdue. Significant too was the defeat of the anti-labor referendum in California.

In contrast to California and New York were the results in such states as Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Connecticut. In all three it was the division of the liberal forces that enabled the Republicans to win. In Minnesota this took the form of a factional primary struggle within the Farmer-Labor Party, precipitated by the right-wing opposition to Governor Benson with Republican aid. In Wisconsin Gov. Phil La Follette's abortive attempt to curry favor with the reactionaries through the organization of the National Progressives and his rejection of New Deal collaboration proved suicidal. In Connecticut Governor Cross lost by two thousand votes to the Republican, Raymond Baldwin, solely because the liberal vote was split by the candidacy of Jasper McLevy, right-wing Socialist.

Victories in New York

APART from the election of the New York Democratic slate and the large pluralities of Senator Wagner and Senator-elect Mead, progressives throughout the country have reason for rejoicing in the victory of James H. Fay, New Dealer, over Congressman John J. O'Connor, the defeat of Tammany's Congressman James Lanzetta by Vito Marcantonio, running on the American Labor and Republican Party tickets, and the remarkable vote polled by Israel Amter, Communist candidate for congressman-at-large. Marcantonio's return to Congress, after an absence of two years, makes up for the defeat in the Democratic primaries of Maury Maverick and assures the progressives in the House of the services of an outstanding personality. Amter, symbol of unity in the struggle against reaction, received more than 100,000 votes (95,434 in New York City alone), far surpassing the previous highest total of the Communist Party in New York State. In sharp contrast was the showing made by Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for governor, whose campaign was tuned to dividing the liberal forces and giving aid and comfort to Republican reaction. In New York City Thomas polled only 18,095 votes, and his statewide vote will probably be under 30,000. This compares with the 1936 vote for the Socialist candidate for governor, Harry Laidler, who received 96,233 votes.

In estimating the character of the next Congress, political alignments rather than party labels are the decisive test. The election of Marcantonio, for example, on paper represents a Republican gain; actually, it is a gain for the New Deal. Similarly, the election of Fay instead of O'Connor and of Mead in place of the late Senator Copeland adds nothing to the number of Democrats, but very much to the strength of the New Deal. The reelection of Representative Sabath of Illinois also means a new liberal chairman for the powerful House Rules Committee, formerly the domain of the tory clique led by Representative O'Connor.

The liberals in both houses of the new Congress will not be lacking in numbers. The question is whether they will be able to close the breaches in their own ranks that rendered them so frequently ineffective in the last Congress. Unity and organization, within Congress and outside of Congress, remains the paramount task.

The Larger Context

AMERICAN foreign policy is going through a major crisis and some sort of historic transformation is inevitable. In the Far East, within the next few months or even weeks, American influence and trade will dwindle to vanishing point—unless Japan finds the path of conquest tougher than her imperial manifestoes are willing to admit. So it is in South America too, although the situation there is not nearly as

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acute. Mr. Roosevelt, at least, knows that if the fascist blight descends fully upon Europe and Asia, it must inevitably make a bid for South America in very quick time. Hence the problem confronting American policy in Asia today is actually the same as that regarding South America tomorrow. We are not likely to take the right road in one case if we go astray in the other.

During the past week, the Japanese government, through semi-official sources, let it be known that it considered the Nine Power Pact safeguarding Chinese territorial integrity worthless. If official confirmation of this view comes out of Tokyo in the next few days, it will take more than verbal fireworks to keep those two interdependent forces—Chinese independence and American trade opportunities—alive. In Latin America, the United States has not waited for the situation to become quite so desperate. The State Department is strongly encouraging the Inter-American Conference at Lima on December 9 to establish a continental policy likely to make fascist, especially Nazi, penetration more difficult. All to the good, this policy tends to influence the enlargement of democratic government throughout South America, though not always consistently.

The fundamental problem, however, is deeper than that any State Department spokesman has yet been willing to face. Fascist activity in South America is only part of a much bigger problem. It is part of that larger whole which includes Spain, China, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Ethiopia, and the entire democratic world. When the Nazis score a victory in Munich, their ability to penetrate South America is immeasurably enhanced. When the democracies of Europe surrender their own national interests to Hitler, they surrender our national interests at the same time. When we turn our backs on democratic Spain, we open South America wide to the fascist axis. It is only by recognizing the interdependence of these crises, all rooted in the fascist world offensive, that an effective policy will emerge. Our South American activity, to the extent that it genuinely counters fascism, is laudable but it will be truly fulfilled only when we begin to see it in this larger context.

What Can We Do?

WHICH leads us to Spain. Franco's latest verdict on the war (it's all over but the fighting, according to a United Press cable) is, of course, nonsense. While loyalist resistance beyond the Ebro maintains its present strength, the rebels cannot even undertake an offensive on any other front, not even against the Almaden mercury mines, which Italy wants so badly, nor against Valencia, which Franco needs to restore lost prestige. We vaguely remember similar verdicts in the past but time made an of them but idle boasting.

But the fact does remain that Spain is the answer to a familiar cry of these post-Munich days: What can we do? The very continuation of the struggle in Spain effectively blocks Chamberlain's effort to establish a fascist directorate over Europe. The Anglo-Italian pact may soon come into nominal force but it must remain an unknown quantity as long as the Spanish republic fights on. This means that fascist intrigue against Spain has increased since Munich and will increase still more. But it means something else too. The progress of the fascist offensive is staked upon the defeat of Spanish democracy; failure to achieve that will hold up the entire offensive and finally break it altogether.

So the answer to "What can we do?" is simple, not particularly new, absolutely clear. If fascism needs a Spanish victory to continue its offensive, then the anti-fascist masses need to carry out Premier Negrín's call, "Resist and conquer!" in order to halt that offensive. The role of the United States becomes more and more vital in the making of this decision. For one of the chief necessaries of republican Spain in the coming critical months is food. The women, children, and workers in the rear face extreme privation. The United States, on the contrary, is seeking ways of avoiding a glut on the wheat, corn, cotton, and other exchanges. We can be of enormous help to Spain, from a purely humanitarian viewpoint. But it will be more than humanitarianism. It will complement and make effective American opposition to fascist penetration in South America. Unless the people and the State Department see the problem as a whole, we cannot be sure that any single effort will find the right mark in the end.

A Plea for World Unity

ON THE occasion of the twenty-first anniversary of the Russian Revolution the Communist International has issued a statement that is of exceptional importance. Addressed to the working people of all countries, the statement emphasizes the paramount need of labor unity to serve as "the foundation of unity of the peoples against fascist aggression." The statement (the full text of which appeared in the *Daily Worker*) points out that "the second imperialist war, a robber war for a new re-partition of the world, has in fact already begun." The problem then becomes one of preventing new acts of aggression and of bringing the wars in Spain and China to a speedy conclusion by defeating the fascist invaders.

The Communist International statement underscores the grave consequences of the Munich betrayal and places the blame not only on the accomplices of fascism in the British and French governments, but on those who prevented effective action by the working class.

> The Munich conspiracy was facilitated by the fact that the working class, as a result of the splitting capitulatory policy of the leaders of the Second [Labor and Socialist] International, was unable to muster its forces to frustrate the criminal conspiracy of German fascism and British reaction.

From this the Communist International draws the conclusion that more than ever is the establishment of labor unity imperative if world peace is to be saved, and that "the task of the working class now is to head the liberation struggle of the enslaved nations and the defense of the peoples threatened by foreign domination."

For us in the United States the message of the Communist International is especially pertinent. The division within our labor movement not only jeopardizes democracy at home, but prevents the mobilization of public opinion for effective action against the fascist threat to the peace of America and the world. The hour is already perilously late, but not yet too late. The CIO convention opening at Pittsburgh Monday can adopt a peace program on which all labor and the entire American people can unite. This requires an embargo against Japan, Germany, and Italy, the lifting of the embargo on Spain, and revision of the unneutral Neutrality Act. It requires the sending of our surplus foodstuffs to Spain on liberal credit terms, thereby helping our farmers and the Spanish people at the same time. It requires active collaboration by the United States with the peace forces in all lands and with the Soviet Union to prevent new Munichs and to call a halt to the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo warmakers in Europe, Asia, and the Americas where—let us remember—they have within the past few months fomented fascist uprisings in three countries.

Action by American labor, action by the American people, action by the American government may well prove decisive and save us from the catastrophe that Munich has brought so near.

Crisis Near in France

THE political temperature in France is rising with such destructive speed that fierce class struggles, reminiscent of 1934 and 1935, seem inescapable. The foreign policy of the Daladier government could not fail to affect internal affairs. But where the pro-fascist foreign policy could be put

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across with the help of widespread illusions about peace, the internal policy of the future needs something more substantial as a club over the people. Instead of subterfuges, Daladier and those he represents are preparing to use force. As a next step, Daladier plans to lengthen hours, cut wages, and cripple the social laws of the past three years. He can do none of these things without a head-on collision with the French labor movement as a whole, including the great trade-union federation and the Socialist Party as well as his uncompromising opposition, the Communists.

Hopefully, the unity of the working class tends to strengthen as the danger of a fascist putsch grows larger and comes nearer. At long last, the Socialist Party has partially retraced its steps and promises to stick together with the Communists against any effort by Daladier to rule by decree beyond November 15. The CGT, within which both Socialist and Radical Socialist elements were before creating factional strife, remains solid and unassailably militant. Even within the Radical Socialist Party, there is great uneasiness about the government's role and Daladier has been repudiated by several sections, most notably in Paris itself. If the Socialists, Communists, and trade unionists fight side by side, as they did in the days of Laval, the greatest difficulties can be overcome and a new face given to democratic international policy. This is the Holy Grail of anti-fascist politics; there is no possible substitute, no matter what happened at Munich.

The case of France demonstrates that surrender to fascism on a world scale, whether it is called non-intervention or neutrality or appeasement, is fatally followed by imitation of fascism in home policy. That is inevitable for two reasons. One, the growing resistance among the people to the accumulating capitulations must be crushed. Two, Hitler tends to intervene more and more openly in the internal politics of the democratic states and has twice delivered public ultimatums that the accession to office of politicians whom he considers unfriendly to Nazi domination will be virtual cause for war. This process is far advanced in France but it is nowhere finished. The coming weeks and months of crises will be accompanied by opportunities. The French masses have reservoirs of strength which have not yet been tapped.

A Railroad Program

THE Wall Street railroad owners have just begun to fight. Forced by the New Deal's firm support of organized railroad labor to abandon their scheduled 15 percent wage cut last week, railroad profiteers are planning a new double-barreled attack on [illegible]c. Wall Street plans a ruthless program of labor speedup and road consolidation at the expense of workers. Although traffic on the roads has increased to a marked degree, reflecting the revival of business, last spring's layoffs have not been rescinded. In addition, new layoffs have already begun in the Northwest and will be spread to the East after election week. Consolidation of duplicate trackage on roads will be pushed through with no provision made for the workers involved.

But while seeking to reduce the annual railroad wage bill, the railroad owners will go to the administration and to Congress, and with pious words demand a virtual subsidy from the federal treasury.

The standard railway unions have had a six-point legislative program before the last two Congresses—so far with no success. The bills call for a six-hour day on railroads, to offset the effects of consolidation; shorter trains, to end speedup; and other measures to aid the millions of unemployed and about-to-be-unemployed railroad workers. In place of this program Wall Street will propose a steal of public funds to "solve" the railroad crisis. Part of the money will be asked as direct subsidies, part as "loans," unsecured, running for decades. The railroad owners plan to raise the cry, "Save the Nation's Railroads" and already they have enlisted some misguided railway union leaders.

The railroad owners must be fought, energetically and on every front. The coming deluge of railroad propaganda in the newspapers and magazines must be guarded against. The simple fact that railroads make more than a respectable profit at this very moment must be remembered. The railroads are in financial hot water today not because they do not turn a pretty penny in operating profits, but because they are hopelessly and criminally overcapitalized. Wall Street wants the government to give it millions of dollars, not to pay railroad wages or provide better service to the public, but rather to pay interest on the watered stocks and bonds.

Railroad labor, consumers' groups, the CIO, and the AFL can unite on a program of their own to solve the railroad crisis. Such a program would include:

1. No railroad consolidations at the expense of workers.

2. Passage of the remedial railway union legislation at the next session of Congress, especially the six-hour day and the short-train bills.

3. No gifts from the federal treasury to Wall Street railroad owners.

4. Any federal government *loans* to be earmarked for the purchase of new railroad equipment and expansion of railroad service (thus spreading railroad labor employment).

5. Government ownership of railroads—but ownership that protects the workers and prohibits the unloading upon the public of watered stocks and bonds.

The CIO Convention

THREE years ago the leaders of eight international unions of the American Federation of Labor met in Washington and launched the Committee for Industrial Organization. From that moment a new epoch began for the American labor movement, vitally affecting all sections of the population and the whole future course of the country. Setting as its goal the organization of the millions of unorganized workers in the mass production industries, the CIO achieved such swift and overwhelming success that it has become a driving force not only for the American workers, but for the people as a whole.

In three years the CIO has grown from one million to four million members and has also stimulated the growth of many AFL unions. It has successfully challenged the two greatest open-shop empires in the country, the steel and auto industries. It has brought unionism to the previously unorganized packing industry. It has furthered the organization of white-collar groups such as newspapermen, government employees, social workers, chemists, architects, and technicians. It has become an increasing factor in breaking down the artificial barriers between workers and middle-class people and farmers and uniting all progressive elements behind the New Deal.

On Monday the first constitutional convention of the CIO opens in Pittsburgh. Apart from the adoption of a constitution and the setting up of a more closely knit organization, the most important question before the convention is labor unity. The CIO has from its inception fought for the unification of American labor despite the divisive policies of President Green of the AFL and his diehard mentors, Messrs. Frey, Woll, Wharton, and Hutcheson. The rising tide of unity sentiment among the AFL membership found expression at the recent Houston convention of the AFL in the vigorous fight waged by Dan Tobin, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, largest union in the federation, for the resumption of genuine efforts toward closing the breach in labor's ranks. The Roosevelt administration has also thrown its weight behind the unity forces. There can be no doubt that the coming convention of the CIO will take further steps to create a united labor movement capable of providing constructive leadership in these critical hours.

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Fortune, Trotsky, Mexico

The New Big Business Tie-Up Against Cárdenas

MARC FRANK

Mexico City.

SMEARING Mexico's progressive government with printers' ink has become a little industry in the United States, or so it seems to many people down here who have followed the *Atlantic Monthly's* recent anthology of anti-Mexican legends, the stream of direct propaganda issued from Rockefeller Center, and now *Fortune's* apparently more "objective" study of Mexican conditions. The *Fortune* number, in particular, shows that reenforcements for the expropriated oil companies and for the Nazi-backed Mexican fascists are now arriving from a rather curious quarter. A close tactical tie-up has been established between the Trotskyites, and "nationalistic" Mexican big business, with some help from individuals high up among the Anarcho-Syndicalist leadership.

Fortune has lately been making elaborate surveys of Latin American countries, fairly well documented and not too obviously hostile to progressive tendencies. They have revived the old tactic of damning with faint praise; not viewing with alarm but reviewing with pained headshakes.

The object is to appear liberal but not radical. *Fortune's* investigators, at least some of them, are chosen among "leftists" who can yet be relied upon to be hostile to "Communism." "Communism," in this sense, as NEW MASSES has repeatedly stressed, includes any progressive regime, such as that of Cárdenas in Mexico. In fact, it hardly differs from the conceptions of the Dies committee. The ideal investigator is therefore a person who, like members of the POUM in Barcelona, will hire himself out to practically anybody in order to indudge a psychopathic hatred of the Popular Front.

Fortune's survey of Mexico stresses the "revolutionary" work of Cárdenas' predecessor, Gen. Abelardo Rodriguez (1932-34), a Calles stooge and multimillionaire. Almost simultaneously with the appearance of the survey, Abelardo Rodriguez began publishing in a reactionary Mexico City daily a series of articles on the USSR. These would be quite unremarkable pieces of slander, were it not for a sentence in the opening article which has caused a certain sensation even in Mexican reactionary circles: "If Trotsky had been able to implant his social theories, it would now perhaps be possible for humanity to know whether a regime based on the principle of 'to each according to his needs' is realizable or not." The article goes on to explain how "Stalinist tyranny" has wiped out all Trotsky's "revolutionary experiments."

This perhaps not unsolicited testimonial to Trotsky from the millionaire politico is rewarded in the *Fortune* article by an attempt to make out that Abelardo Rodriguez was the real initiator of the Mexican Six Year Plan, the man who really revived the agrarian reform before Cárdenas gave it its present vigor. While it is true that the plan was elaborated in Rodriguez's time, mainly as an election platform not intended to be taken seriously, and while this gesture was the result of growing mass pressure for reform, official statistics show that under this "revolutionary" president the killings of workers doubled and jailings rose by 20 percent. Although the tempo of agrarian reform did begin to speed up in 1933, the land divided by all three Calles stooge presidents from 1929 to 1934 did not even amount to as much as that granted by Calles himself. Abelardo Rodriguez was in fact confronted by much the same position as Calles himself at the beginning of his presidency. Certain gestures to the masses had to be made in order to preserve the politicians' and business men's wider interests.

The *Fortune* article is illustrated, significantly enough, by the leader of one section of the Mexican Trotskyites, Trotsky's landlord, the painter Diego Rivera. The illustrations are claimed as "made especially for *Fortune*," though one of them looks a lot like a rehash of part of one of Diego's more famous frescoes. The writer of the article—which has pretty obviously been a good deal edited in the *Fortune* office—is described as "a talented young lady." It is no particular secret in Mexico that this is the young lady whose lengthy defense of the POUM last year was remarkable for partisan bitterness rather than accuracy of fact. Her name is Anita Brenner.

This alliance of big business and Trotskyist "leftism" may be dangerous, especially as the Trotskyites are now trying, as the POUM did, to act as a rallying point for all the Mexican anti-democratic groups. At a recent and rowdy meeting held in Mexico City to oppose the big congresses for Latin-American labor unification and against war and fascism, the speakers billed included Diego Rivera himself, the Argentine Anarchist Matteo Fossa, the Puerto Rican Juan Juarbe y Juarbe, whose attempts to break up the Anti-War Congress caused the CTM delegates to accuse him of "trying to introduce Trotskyist contraband," an American, C. Platkin, and Julio Ramirez, leader of the Anarcho-Syndicalist CGT (General Labor Federation), who is now offering his organization as a refuge for scab unions formed by Yocupicio, reactionary governor of Sonora, and the Gold Shirt and Falangist company unions in Monterrey. If this combination should extend to an alliance with Mexican big business, with its Nazi-supported Employers Association and its straight fascist Middle-Class Federation, the threat to Mexican democracy will be very serious.

Abelardo Rodriguez is a convenient figure around which to build such a combination. As *Fortune* stresses, he has some appearance of liberalism. Although a Calles man, he is not openly on bad terms with Cárdenas. He is donating to the National Museum a very expensive replica of Montezeuma's famous feathered head-dress. In return, he is still allowed to remain economic, if not political, boss of the Territory of Lower California, where he built his vast fortune by awarding himself most of the lucrative gambling concessions along the United States borde Above all, he is the biggest representative the Mexican big business interests created b Calles.

Thus Abelardo Rodriguez (and the polic behind *Fortune*) can coincide with such per sons as the Trotskyist Juarbe y Juarbe, wh disguised his contraband with an apparentl genuine demand for the support of the caus of Puerto Rican independence.

Especially with the intensification of fasci penetration after the Munich agreement a Chamberlain's grant of carte blanche to Jap in South China, it will be essential to expo the spurious propaganda now coming out Mexico. The line used to be that Mexica were simply a bunch of bandits to be thre ened with the big stick. Now, far more sidiously and far more dangerously bec actually supported by anti-democratic gro within the country itself, it is commo simply to suggest that Cárdenas is sincere ill-advised, a continuation of the policy ir ated by Morgan-partner Morrow in Ca time. Now it will attempt to capitalize the general stench given off by oil in United States since Teapot Dome, in o to introduce German, Japanese, and It influence in a desperate attempt to tor progressive democracy in Mexico.

The strategy, in fact, is to get Cár both coming and going. If Rockefeller C fails to down him one way, the Fourth national will try from the other end. A moment, Cárdenas is sufficiently wel fended on both fronts, with the pract unanimous support of the peasants and ers. But the responsibility of equall gressive forces in the United States that the propaganda of Mexican anti- crats is exposed must be very great, b in the last resort potential Mexican will look to their associates in the States for active aid or at the very le enforcement of a form of "non-interve sabotage.

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SELF-DETERMINATION

Fred Ellis

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What About the USSR?

The Author of *I Like America* Answers a Question

GRANVILLE HICKS

IT MAY as well be admitted at the outset that no reader of *I Like America* has asked me this question. Perhaps there is no reason why a reader should. The book makes it clear that I am talking about American conditions and American needs. The problems I describe have to be solved regardless of what is going on in the USSR.

It is the reviewers who have been talking about the Soviet Union. I think I know why. Here, let us say, is a young man who has been asked to review the book for Section Five of the New York Sunday *Times*. On the one hand, he knows that J. Donald Adams will not be pleased if he praises a book by a Communist. On the other, he finds the book's arguments fairly watertight. What is he to do? Well, Communists are not, to say the least, enemies of the Soviet Union. Moreover, I state in the book that I find the accomplishments of the Soviets encouraging. What is easier than to damn the USSR, hoping thus to damn the book?

If the reviewers spoke for themselves alone, I should not bother to devote an article in this series to the Soviet Union, but I am afraid that some of the 25,000 readers have the same objections. And I am also afraid that they do not write me for the very reason that they feel they have settled something when they say, "Bolsheviks! Stalin! Purges!" That is why I want to make this point clear.

I am not an expert on the Soviet Union. I have not spent even the traditional six weeks in Moscow and Leningrad. This is not something I boast about; on the contrary, I regard it as a misfortune. I should like to go to the Soviet Union—for six weeks or, if possible, longer. But it may as well be pointed out that, at the moment, my information, like that of most of my readers and reviewers, is secondhand.

I should like to go to the USSR, but I do not think my not having been there lessens the value of my book. One does not have to be an authority on the Soviets in order to understand that, if the average annual income of one-third of all American families is $471, there must be a great deal of misery in the United States. Nearly half of all our citizens are inadequately housed, clothed, and fed. Only one American in ten lives in comfort. And this is perfectly unnecessary, since we are capable of producing enough for everybody. These are facts about America, and one can interpret them without having set foot in Moscow.

I Like America seeks to call these facts to the attention of the American people. It describes a situation and asks, "What are you going to do about it?" As I have said in an earlier article, its aim is to emphasize the need for action, not to prescribe a particular program. I tell, of course, what I think we ought to do, but I put my program in the form of a suggestion. "If you do not like my proposal," I say, "have you a better one? We must do something."

I am not trying to deceive anybody, however. I personally believe that only Socialism can give us the abundance that is our birthright, and I make this quite clear. This ought to indicate for what reasons and to what extent I am interested in the Soviet Union. There Socialism has been tried for more than twenty years. I should be altogether a fool if I did not ask myself what this trial has proved about the nature of Socialism.

It has proved a good deal. It has shown that Socialism can steadily increase production, can eliminate depressions, can banish unemployment, and can raise the standard of living of a whole people. This is what we want to know. In a sense, other achievements of the Soviet Union—the emancipation of women, for example, the abolition of illiteracy, and the elimination of race problems—are irrelevant. If Socialism can use a country's productive resources, as capitalism cannot, that is all that is necessary for the purposes of our argument.

You see how silly it becomes to complain that the USSR is not Utopia. Only crackpot romanticists have ever said that it was. The friends of the Soviet Union are well aware of its shortcomings, and, if they usually seem more concerned with defending than with criticizing it, that is because they naturally hasten to answer the lies of its enemies. Many of the stories circulated in supposedly reputable newspapers are so fabulously false that all one can do is brand them as slanders. But to deny flatly such canards is not to maintain that all is perfect.

Never having been in the Soviet Union, I cannot pretend to talk about details, but I can recognize general tendencies. And what amazes me is that, in the face of such handicaps, so much has been accomplished. After years of czarist corruption and maladministration, after world war and counter-revolution and foreign intervention, the Soviets undertook not only to rebuild a devastated Russia but also to establish a new kind of social order. And they have had to do their work while surrounded by desperate enemies.

If Socialism had been tried under ideal conditions and had failed, then it might be legitimate to object to any advocacy of the socialization of the means of production. But Socialism has been tried under almost the worst possible conditions, and has succeeded. That is the one fact that is relevant to my argument in *I Like America.*

If we examine more closely the reasoning of the reviewers, their fallacies become perfectly clear. They say in effect that, because conditions are less than perfect in the Soviet Union, we must put up with an economy of scarcity in the United States. Their account of conditions often seems to me mistaken, but I am willing to waive that point for the moment, for, even if the situation in the Soviet Union were much worse than they maintain, my argument would be unaffected.

Take, for example, the question of civil liberties in the Soviet Union, a question that often agitates those who are singularly indifferent to violations of the rights of American citizens. I am in no position to make a first-hand pronouncement on this point. Friends who have been in the Soviet Union tell me that the average worker there has far more liberty than the average worker in the United States. Knowing a little about what happens to workers in the big factories and the company towns, I can believe this. And freedom of speech on the job is about as important as anything can be.

But I know that this won't satisfy the liberals. They are thinking about their own middle-class privileges. They say that over here they have a right to criticize the government, whereas in the Soviet Union they wouldn't have. To a certain extent they are, so far as I can tell, right. Certain types of criticism are tolerated in the United States that aren't tolerated in the USSR.

It would be easy to say a good deal about the limitations on freedom of speech that exist, even for the intellectuals, in the United States—the economic restrictions that are more potent than laws can ever be. But I don't want to raise that argument. What puzzles me is why anybody should expect complete freedom of speech in the USSR. We have Nazi agents in this country, with which Germany certainly does not expect to go to war in the near future. Who can doubt that Germany is using every opponent of the Soviet regime to undermine a nation against which it is plotting immediate warfare? And who can blame the Soviet Union for using every method at its disposal for checking them? I am not a bloodthirsty person, and that is why I wish the Spanish government had taken severe measures to restrain its foes as soon as it came into power.

No doubt mistakes are made and injustices are done, but I wonder if we have the right to demand perfection. I grow somewhat impatient with persons who make so much of the little mistakes and fail to recognize the great achievements. You may say that the achievements of the Soviet Union are a matter for argument. Look, however, at its role

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in the international situation, which is something that anyone can understand, whether he has bee[n] to the USSR or not. Who has helped the [Spa]nish people? Not the United States, for all [its] vaunted love of democracy. Who has helped the Chinese? Not our country, not England, not France. Who staunchly stood by treaty obligations to the Czechs? Not the so-called democracies of the West. The critics of the Soviet Union might try to imagine what the world situation would have been, these past five years, without the influence of that country. Today, when the moral bankruptcy of the British and French governments has been so devastatingly exposed, the defenders of democracy and peace everywhere know that their great reliance is the USSR.

I am not trying to balance the good and the bad, so that I can prove that the bad is slightly outweighed. I believe that the fundamental tendencies of the USSR are all good. But, on the other hand, I do not want to appear to minimize whatever evils there are. It is unnecessary to minimize them, for the Soviet Union is big enough to acknowledge its shortcomings and try to overcome them.

As for the argument that, if we try to introduce Socialism in the United States, we will have precisely the same evils, that seems to me nonsense. Wherever Socialism is attempted, it will have to be developed in terms of the situation that exists at that time and that place. When the oppressors use violence, they make violence the only weapon that can be employed against them. It is obvious, for example, that, when the revolution takes place in Germany, it will be a bloody affair.

So far as the United States is concerned, it is conceivable that, if we do not resolutely resist them now, the profit-makers will succeed in fastening their economy of scarcity upon us by the use of force. They may establish a despotism as terrible as the czar's in pre-war Russia or Hitler's in present-day Germany. If that happens, a time will come when the only salvation of the American people will be a conflict as cruel and exhausting as the War of Independence or the Civil War.

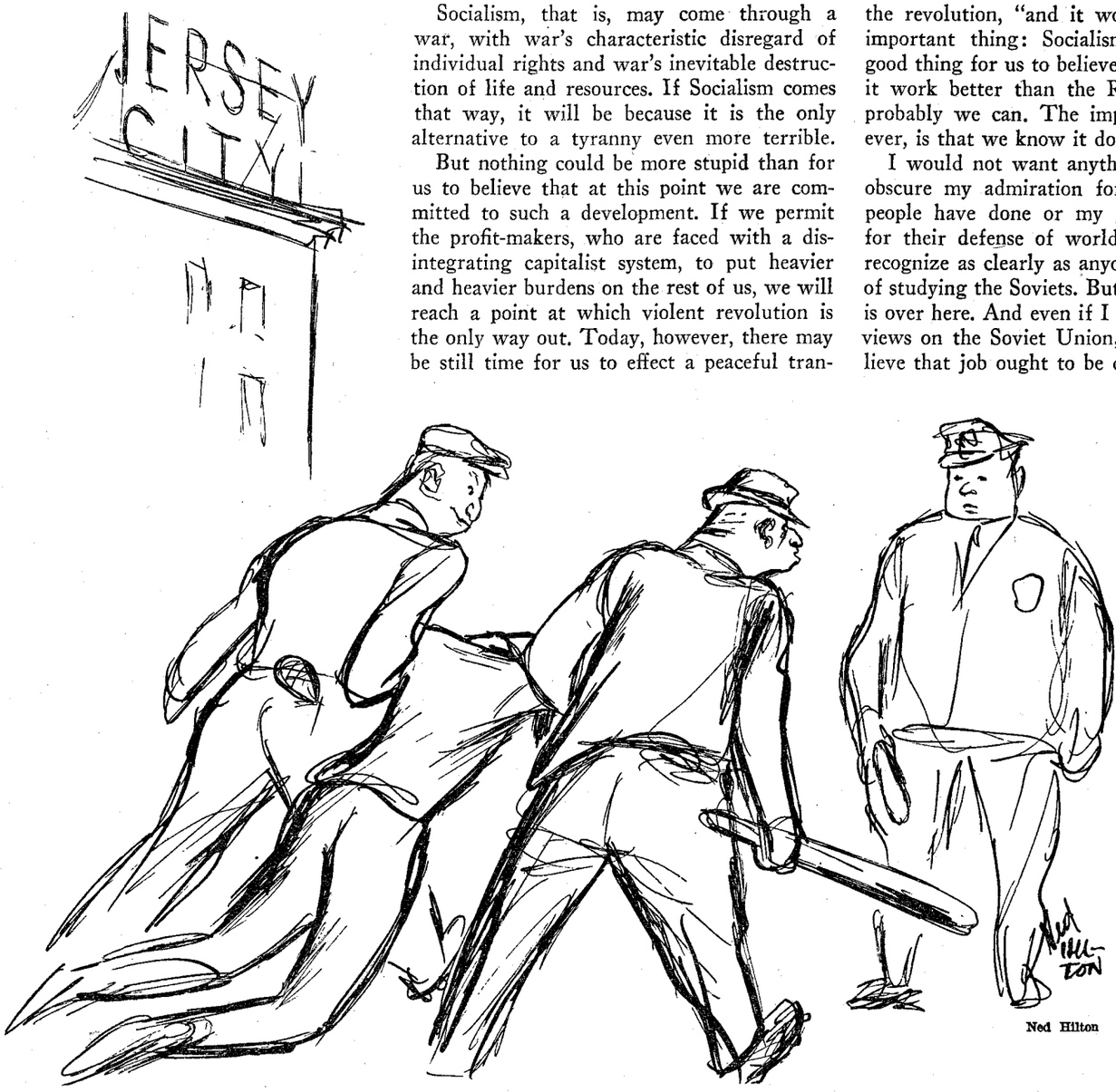
Socialism, that is, may come through a war, with war's characteristic disregard of individual rights and war's inevitable destruction of life and resources. If Socialism comes that way, it will be because it is the only alternative to a tyranny even more terrible.

But nothing could be more stupid than for us to believe that at this point we are committed to such a development. If we permit the profit-makers, who are faced with a disintegrating capitalist system, to put heavier and heavier burdens on the rest of us, we will reach a point at which violent revolution is the only way out. Today, however, there may be still time for us to effect a peaceful transition. At any rate we must use our democratic rights to curb the powers of the capitalists and to force them to serve the interests of the people. I believe, as I have said, that such a program will eventually lead to the abolition of capitalism, but the important thing is to act now, in the interests of the 90 percent of the American people who do not have an American standard of living.

The establishment of Socialism in this country will involve plenty of problems. Whether it will also involve hardships and sufferings and terrible losses depends on us. If we have sense enough to keep on moving in the direction of an economy of abundance, we can make the transition with a minimum of disturbance. If, however, we wait until Socialism is the only alternative to tyranny, we will have to pay for our folly.

In any case we are not going to duplicate the history of Russia. We can learn from its history, but its development is neither to be taken as a blueprint nor regarded as a bugaboo. "I have seen the future," Lincoln Steffens said when he went to Russia soon after the revolution, "and it works." That is the important thing: Socialism works. It is a good thing for us to believe that we can make it work better than the Russians have, and probably we can. The important fact, however, is that we know it does work.

I would not want anything I have said to obscure my admiration for what the Soviet people have done or my gratitude to them for their defense of world peace. I think I recognize as clearly as anyone the importance of studying the Soviets. But our job, after all, is over here. And even if I held very different views on the Soviet Union, I should still believe that job ought to be done.



Ned Hilton

"He's a Red. He had a copy of the Constitution in his pocket."

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Flatfoot

A Short Story

ROBERT SMITH

RILEY pushed the visored cap back off his red forehead and let his hand run down over the buttons on his coat. The doughnuts and coffee gave a sweet fullness to his belly that made him almost content. He sucked the doughnut crumbs out of his teeth.

Across the white-topped table Palento sat talking in a low voice, pleasantly and continually. He sat sideways in the chair, ready to get up and accept money when a customer left, and he talked to Riley over his shoulder.

Riley, contorting his mouth to free all the bits of sweet dough from his teeth, watched Palento through slitted eyes. The words the Italian spoke passed blandly through Riley's mind, like water over glass.

This guy's a screwball, Riley told himself, this dumb screwball. He looked down at the sleek blue bulge of his belly and picked off a tiny crumb or two. He slid a cold glance at Palento and nodded to indicate that it was okay with him. Whatever he said, it was okay, okay; but he couldn't sit here forever.

Pushing the squeaking chair back, he straightened himself in his harness, setting all the brass buttons in an even line down his front, giving a hitch to his belt and fumbling to get the holster and nippers hanging straight again. He opened his mouth as he ran his tongue down between his teeth and lips, discovering a generous little store of doughnut crumbs which he savored deliberately.

"Well, going, kid?" said Palento.

"Uh," said Riley. He moved ponderously out from among the clustered chairs, pushing them here and there. We went out without looking back at Palento or once speaking to him. Some screwball, that cheap guinea, he thought.

There was an edge to the weather outside, yet it was a good clear night, with stars and no wind, just right for October. But Riley was easily discomforted. He stood for a moment in front of the restaurant, looking across the wide street at the unlighted store fronts, wishing to God he didn't have to slap the pavements tonight.

But he got moving at last, conscious of his own size and the figure he made in his uniform. He moved along the center of the sidewalk, slowly, letting the few pedestrians make way.

So, he thought, the dumbest cop in the precinct, huh? So.

His little ears began to burn slightly at the memory. He squinted angrily at the people who passed him.

So. That flatfoot.

He recalled the captain's harsh weathered face. The flatfoot. Some day somebody would take a fall out of him. Some people get tired of that wise-guy stuff. Beano Mickey or somebody like that would take a fall out of the punk.

It was a comforting thought: the captain might run into the Mick one day and Beano would tell him where to head in. Riley walked along in an almost semi-conscious state while he let that idea develop. If someone had called his name now he might not have heard, yet he paused at the crossing and picked his way through the slim traffic without trouble.

The Mick would be the boy to tell the captain off now. It would be like this: Suppose the Mick should just waltz in there some day and give the captain the eye—the old eye.

"Look," the Mick would say, "this Riley is one of the boys. You know what I mean? He's one of the boys. It wouldn't be such a hot idea to get funny with Riley. You know?"

Boy, you can imagine the captain's face! He wouldn't get funny with the Mick, he knew that much.

"Listen, Riley," the captain would say, "you fit with the Mick. I never knew you fitted with the Mick like that. You sure fit with him, kid."

Riley began to smile, slowly, inwardly, yet more than one person who went by looked up at him and smiled back. Riley did not see anyone. He just began to notice where he was: Chatwell Street. Right down here was one of the Mick's joints. He made toward it as if he had been headed there all the while. It was nice to have a friend that would talk up for a guy.

A neon sign marked the Louvre Bar and Grill. Riley, without turning his head, took a sidelong glance through the long front window but could make out nothing but the row of faces and heads at the circular bar. The atmosphere was smoky. A little cluster of people blocked the door. Riley went by. His eye caught the lighted clock at the corner of Harrison: he could get over and ring his box and then mosey back this way.

He tried doors absently as he made his way up the block, setting his feet down solidly. He made an enormous figure in each dark doorway, and occasionally cast a great shadow inside. He could imagine the scare he would throw into any little punk that wanted to get funny on his beat.

His call made, he came back on another block and around to the Louvre again. The doorway was clear. He came in casually and found Charlie, the manager, a bald, bilious little man in an alpaca coat, sitting just inside the door.

"Hyuh," said Charlie, utterly without expression.

"Howzit boy?" said Riley, opening his mouth in a tight little smile. "Your can working?"

"Oh yeh," said Charlie. "Sure. Downstairs."

"I know," said Riley, making for the stairs. The games were downstairs and the noise came up in a sudden burst as the door was opened. Riley pulled it tight behind him. It was not necessary to go near the games in order to reach the toilet.

Riley fooled around a little in the toilet, rearranging his harness and running his hands over his hair, then getting his hat just straight. He held his face close to the mirror and fingered a pimple beside his nose.

This was a nice little layout, he was thinking. A man could do worse than to get a piece of a layout like this. If a guy fitted all right he could make himself a piece of change. He fished out his cigarettes and smoked, leaning against the washbowls. A tall man came in, his hair dangling. He eyed Riley drunkenly.

"How do," he said. "How are you, officer?"

"Okay. Okay," said Riley, nodding solemnly, half closing his eyes.

On his way out the man stopped to put his hand on Riley's arm. His head dropped forward and it took him a second to recover himself.

"Look," he said. "You fellows are all right. I always say when a man's out risking his life to propec—to protect property, he's all right. He deserves the best."

"That's right," said Riley. "You've got the right dope there, all right."

"I always say that," the man said.

He looks like the bucks, thought Riley. They come in here, all right. The real dough.

The man went out and Riley doused his cigarette. He gave his coat a hitch and went up the stairs.

By the cigarette counter this time, his head bent back a little to bring his ear near Charlie, was Beano Mickey himself. He was a medium-sized man with a round red face. He wore a derby straight on his head in a stiff, unstylish manner. His face was like frozen beef, veined and hard, with eyes of pale blue glass.

Riley stopped at the counter to pick up a few toothpicks.

"Ah, kid," he breathed, sure that he was adopting just the right amount of secretiveness.

The Mick became aware of his bulk and rolled his head a little to get the corner of one eye on Riley. His greeting was an upward lift of his chin, nearly imperceptible. Charlie stopped muttering into Mickey's ear.

"You're raking it in tonight," said Riley, busy with a toothpick. There was no answer at all for a moment. Mickey stood up and watched the customers absently, while Charlie

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studied the rubber coin pad on the counter. Finally Charlie spoke:

"Yeh. That's right."

Riley shifted heavily, settling back against the counter and letting his gaze follow Mickey's. Charlie began to whistle tunelessly through his teeth. After a minute or two, Mickey turned and fixed his cold round eyes on Riley.

"On your way, flatty," he said, in a raspy, high-pitched voice. "You're no ad for this place."

Riley opened his mouth as if he had been punched under the ribs. His tongue hung wordless. Then the blood, burning hot, rushed up into his face and brought sudden tears to his eyes. Mickey did not take his glance off him. Riley gulped and blinked.

"Okay," he said. "If you want to be that way . . ."

He made for the door in a sort of daze, his feet clumping. He was outside and partway up the block before he could manage any organized thought. So he wanted to be that kind of a guy? Jesus, a guy couldn't even use his can. Okay, then, okay. If he wanted to be that kind of a guy. He was getting too big for his pants, that guy.

Riley felt sick. My God, it's too bad a guy couldn't stop into a place when he felt sick. He could be coming down with something. He turned a corner blindly, making into a long dim block marked by two or three arc lights. There were not many people moving here and his own scraping footsteps echoed.

He looked about him angrily, as if he expected to find thugs lurking in every dark doorway. It was mostly a tenement block, with a few dingy groceries, now dark, and a drugstore where light showed feebly through a window cluttered with signs.

Down the block several little kids ran in circles under an arc light and Riley eyed them from far off to see if they might be up to something. Then he saw a small figure between him and the drugstore corner, moving noiselessly toward him. He was startled to see the boy so quickly, for he hadn't heard or noticed him before. He was wearing sneakers and he moved along close to the building line, where it was darkest. Riley moved over to meet the kid head-on. The boy moved along quickly, his head bent, taking short straight steps. Something gleamed in his hand and Riley saw that it was a bottle.

Oh, he told himself. So.

The boy saw him and hesitated imperceptibly, then moved out a little to get around him. Riley sidestepped and blocked the boy.

"What's the rush?" he demanded. "What you got there?"

"Ginger-ale," the boy said faintly. "I just bought it."

Riley lifted the bottle out of his hand.

"Oh yeah?" he said. It was a quart bottle, still wet, with just shreds of some damp label still clinging. Riley knocked it against the building wall and the neck broke off, tinkling to the sidewalk. The stuff fizzed out over Riley's hand and sleeve and spattered his shoes. It was ginger ale. Riley dumped it all and dropped the bottle into the gutter.

"Gee," the kid wailed. "What did you do that for? I had to save up for that. I always wanted one of those big . . ." Sobs choked him off.

"Oh yeah?" Riley repeated. He brought his open hand up quickly and caught the kid across the cheek. The kid gasped, "O-o-o-o!" and the sobbing stopped.

"You want some more of that?" Riley demanded. "Maybe that's what you want, huh?"

The kid sidled away.

"Beat it," said Riley, and the kid ran.

Riley looked after the boy for a moment, then turned and started on his way. He straightened his sleeves and brushed off what moisture he could.

Fresh little kids around here, he thought. They sure came fresh around here. Little wise guys. He felt a sort of satisfaction, like a fresh infusion in his veins, and he strode along challenging the whole block with his lifted chin.

The kids under the light were quiet as he approached and he eyed them closely, waiting for just one false move—just one wise remark. Just one.

He moved on toward the corner, his heels resounding. Then, in spite of himself, his thoughts returned to Mickey. That mug. Other thoughts died unworded as a twinge of fear tingled in his belly. Okay. The guy was tough. If he wanted to be like that. Okay.

He turned the corner on to a street still darker, where the elevated tracks made a dismal black canopy. There were rows of empty red-brick tenements here, with tattered posters, like peeling skin, hanging from the walls. The doorways had brief steps; and the pale street lights were just spots. Riley walked carefully here, setting his feet down with less noise, as if he were stalking someone. The shadows were deep and there was no one moving.

Then suddenly he came upon two legs stretched out into his path. He caught himself in time to avoid stumbling over them.

Jesus!

A chill gripped the pit of his stomach as if he had swallowed an icicle. His hand groped aimlessly between his coattails, at his billy—gun—nippers. Then he bent to look closely at the man's head, sunk in the darkness of the doorway. If somebody had croaked . . .

The man's hat was pulled down, leaving a pale blur of his face showing. Riley bent close and caught the sweetish reek of alcohol. A surge of anger dragged at his breath and popped his mouth open. With one big hand he grabbed the slack of the man's coat and dragged him nearly erect.

"Oh," he demanded. "Drunk, eh? Drunk!"

He shook the man into sleepy consciousness and the fellow emitted a sort of blubbering protest. His legs would not support him. Riley shoved him against the brick wall and

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tore the man's hat off, revealing tousled black hair and eyes only half open. Some dock-walloper, probably. Some cheap ginzo.

"So!" he yelled into the man's face. He threw the fellow's hat to the sidewalk and drew out his billy.

"Drunk, eh?" he snarled. He cracked the billy across the man's cheek and ear, making the lolling neck stiffen in pain.

"Drunk!" he yelled again, his voice nearly cracking. "So!"

He lost his grip on the man's coat and the drunk sagged in the middle as if he were hanging over a rail. Blood was showing behind his ear, a black smear in the dim light.

Riley brought the billy down across the man's kidneys now and the man moaned in agony. The billy thwacked into the soft part of the man's back again and again until finally he fell sideways into a heap, writhing, clutching at the pavement.

Riley grabbed him in two hands and bundled him into the doorway, letting his head strike the concrete step. The man's moans were continuous, as if he were crying in his sleep.

Riley, his chest heaving and the hot blood pounding in his ears, looked down at the dark form. He kicked the man's hat into the gutter. Drunk, eh? The bum!

He straightened his own hat and tucked his billy away. He ran his fingers inside his collar. He was sweating to beat hell. These lousy bums!

He set out slowly on his beat once more, breathing noisily. His undershirt began to feel clammy against his ribs. Whew! Some day he'd kill one of these punks. He'd kill him sure.

★

Big Companies Grow

AT THE end of 1937, according to a recently published United Press survey, twenty-five corporations in the United States claimed assets of a billion dollars or more each.

These companies included six railways, six insurance companies, five banks, five utility systems, and three industrials.

They had combined assets of $47,228,527,082 at the end of 1937, an increase of more than $600,000,000 during the year in spite of the crisis and depression which began in the middle of 1937.

Largest companies in each field, classified according to the size of their assets, were, with one exception, the same as those given in Anna Rochester's *Rulers of America*. They were as follows:

Railways—Pennsylvania Railroad Co.
Utilities—American Telephone & Telegraph Co.
Banking—Chase National Bank
Insurance—Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.
Industrial—Standard Oil Co. (of New Jersey)

At the time of the Rochester compilation, the largest assets were reported by the U. S. Steel Corp., which comes second on the present list.—LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION.

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Readers' Forum

"Ripping" *Ken*

TO NEW MASSES: Something happened to me last Monday which, as they say in the vernacular, shouldn't happen to a dog!

Lodged in my letter box I found a copy of *Ken* —and a letter from publisher Smart, himself, telling me I was one of the chosen—that the unfilled portion of my subscription to the defunct *Photo History* would be applied to *Ken*. And to prove that whatever he might be short on, he is certainly long on gall, Mr. Smart says that, more than any other magazine, *Ken* is like *Photo History*.

Of course, he proves his point—right in the very issue sent with the letter. For example: an article titled "CIO—Waning Empire," which has the United Mine Workers thumbing noses at their leader and the United Automobile Workers "rotten with the leprosy of Communism"; for example: a page of very unfunny, very vicious drawings by John Mackey.

NEW MASSES readers who remember the *Photo History* issues on China, Spain, and labor will recognize the similarity between *Photo History* and *Ken*—or won't they?

I was going to express my indignation to publisher Smart, and at the same time insist that he remove my name from their "subscription" list. But since my little son is at the age when tearing magazines seems to be a great joy—for the sake of my file of NEW MASSES and other publications I subscribed to and want—let *Ken* come. I can assure it a ripping good welcome.

New York City. JOE WOOD.

We have received other letters commenting on Mackey's cartoon. *Ken's* policy of attempting to placate advertisers by combining Red-baiting with anti-fascism is as well known as it is ineffective. Why Mackey, who has appeared often in NEW MASSES, should lend himself to this dirty work, we do not pretend to understand.—THE EDITORS.

Old-Age Pensions

TO NEW MASSES: May I call your attention to an unfortunate characterization of the role of the old-age-pension advocate, as portrayed by William Gropper in last week's NEW MASSES?

The old-age-pension advocate is pictured as a "crackpot," leading a parade of reactionaries. Undoubtedly Gropper had in mind the fact that the reactionary and fascist elements in United States are trying to make use of those mass movements (such as that for old-age pensions) which are motivated by "sound aspirations, but with incorrect and even fantastic panacea programs and dangerous demagogic leaders," in order to lead them into the camp of fascism or place them at the service of fascism. (A case in point is the Townsend movement, which suffered a serious setback when its reactionary leadership attempted to defeat Roosevelt in the 1936 elections by supporting Lemke.)

The leadership of some of these old-age-pension movements may be reactionary, but certainly their following is not. The aged who correctly desire security in their old age are on the side of progress. They can be won over to the growing democratic front against reaction and fascism by patiently countering the weaknesses and fallacies of their program, with a constructive immediate practical program and the ultimate Socialist goal.

It is our job to make these distinctions clearly in order to prevent these panacea movements, based on the burning needs of the people, from being used by the camp of reaction for their anti-democratic, anti-progressive purposes.

For an excellent analysis of panacea movements in the United States, I would refer your readers to an article by William Z. Foster in the November 1938 issue of the *Communist*.

MORTIMER DON, Editor
New York City. *State of Affairs.*

"Let Us Give Thanks"

TO NEW MASSES: The enclosed proclamation, issued by the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, presents an opportunity to bring to the attention of a large number of American people the need of helping Spain today. Knowing your interest in this cause we ask you to place this campaign before NEW MASSES readers.

HERMAN F. REISSIG, Executive Secretary.

[ENCLOSURE]

On Thanksgiving Day, 1938, let us give thanks:

For the faith and courage of the Spanish people, who, despite ruthless foes and faithless friends, the destruction of their homes and the ravages of hunger, refuse to surrender their democracy or betray the cause of human freedom;

For millions of men and women in many countries who have understood the true meaning of the struggle in Spain and have tirelessly worked that freedom might not perish from the Spanish earth;

For doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, social workers, and the many other volunteers who, loyal to great American ideals, have crossed the sea to place their training and their strength at the service of the Spanish republic;

For countless gifts of money, food, medicine, clothing given by Americans, which have restored the wounded to health, established homes for homeless children, prevented death from hunger, protected women and children and the aged from cold, and helped a brave people to carry on its fight;

For these things let us give thanks!

But Thanksgiving, 1938, must be, above all, a time for renewed dedication.

Hunger threatens to do in Spain what the fascist armies have failed to do. . . . Last winter the word was "malnutrition." This winter it is "starvation." . . . With American markets glutted with wheat, shall Spanish people die for lack of bread? . . . Surplus in America! Desperate need in Spain! Who can take seriously our assertions of faith in democracy if we permit that situation to continue?

We therefore ask the American people, in the name of the freedom which they enjoy—the freedom which in Central Europe has been betrayed but which the Spanish people will not surrender—to take the following action:

First, let us petition our government to send from our vast surplus enough wheat to feed the hungry in Spain. As individuals and as groups assembled let us demand that democracy in Spain be not defeated by hunger which we could easily prevent.

Second, let there be no Thanksgiving meal in any home without a place being set for a Spanish child. And let a gift of money or food be placed on the empty plate to be forwarded, as a Thanksgiving contribution, to the Spanish people.

More than three hundred years ago the first Thanksgiving was celebrated in America by the Puritans, who rejoiced in their first harvest in a new land where they had found religious and political freedom.

Let the observance of our national holiday be a

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cause of thanksgiving in all the cities and villages of Spain!

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Not Fit to Print?

TO NEW MASSES: Recently in comment upon an editorial that appeared in the New York *Times*, the tenor of which was that the Communist Party needn't think it would gain anything by backing the Lehman candidacy, nor hope to win any Lehman support of its policies, I wrote a letter to the *Times* mail bag, which did not appear. I telephoned to inquire why not, and was told that the editor "did not think it was true."

I enclose the letter herewith, and wonder whether you—and your readers—might not think it more likely that the *Times* was motivated by a desire not to let the general reading public in on the fact that it is very true indeed.

[ENCLOSURE]

Some years ago, as a reporter on a newspaper with an avowed Anglophobia, I was given an assignment to interview a South American diplomat whose country was then teetering on the edge of warfare with one of its neighbors. My editor's final admonition was: "Get him to say that it is England that is stirring up the trouble."

Naturally I couldn't get him to say anything of the sort—a fine kind of diplomat he would have been to do so!—and so the interesting but noncommittal material I brought back was thrown aside as of no value.

This was but one of many demonstrations that I had of the *à priori* bias which is newspaper approach to the news. Yet despite my knowledge from fairly extensive personal experience that "editorial policy" has no scruple against quoting Scripture to its purpose, I remain the victim of a persistent naiveté that is bewildered again and again by each new impact with editorials like that in the *Times* of Saturday, October 15, dealing with the relation between Communist tactics and the Lehman and Poletti candidacies in the November 8 election. I'm not a Communist; but one need not be, in order to see in the editorial that careful skirting about the edges of truth, while dealing with fact, which is of the very essence of sophistry. The Communist Party has endorsed Lehman and Poletti: true. But why should it be so difficult for arbiters of the *Times* editorial policy to believe that the motive could be quite simply what it is asserted to be—a desire to set aside all other considerations for the moment, in a united effort to defeat the forces of reaction as embodied in misnamed Republicanism? Why, unless it be through willful blindness, do the *Times* editors not see that the menace of fascism, increasingly rampant in the world, calls for increased effort to strengthen the progressive forces already existent, and that the Communists may be sincere in declaring their recognition of a fact so apparent to every thinking person, and be acting in accordance with it, without any sinister esoteric intention?

The answer is obvious. Editorial policy says: "Hew at the Communist Party upon every possible pretext, and let the chips fall where they may." The Red bugaboo is thus used once again to frighten many persons away from seeing the importance of that united front against reaction which is the only hope of salvation and civilization in a fascism-ridden world.

BERENICE E. NOAR.

New York City.

One comment on the excellent letter above: the Communist Party did not "endorse" Lehman and Poletti. It supported the progressive program of the New Deal against the threat of tory Republican control. Another comment is supplied by simple arithmetic: Lehman's plurality, 65,320; indicated Communist vote on incomplete returns, over 100,000.—THE EDITORS.

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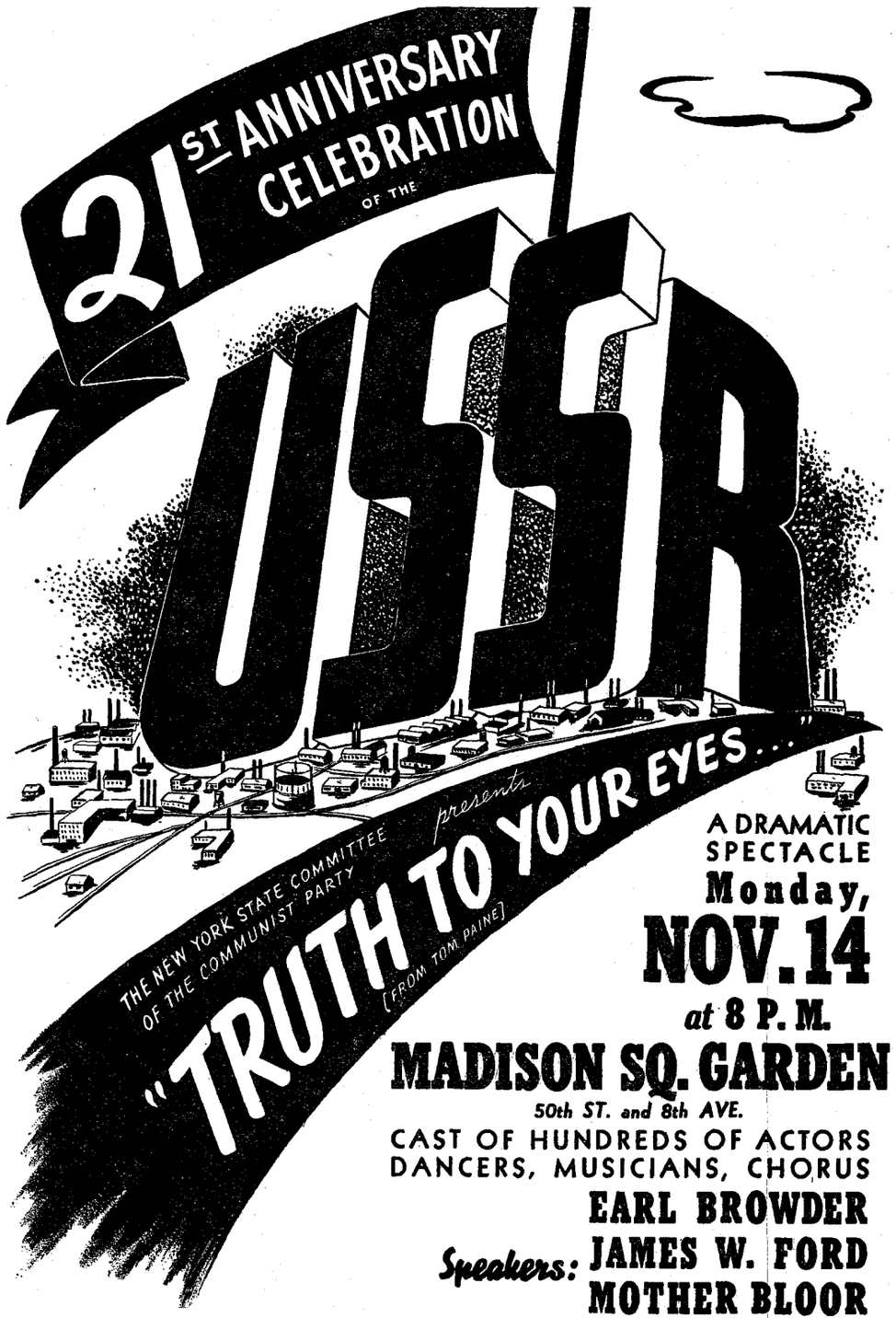

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Man's Hope

ANDRÉ MALRAUX'S latest novel (*Man's Hope*. Random House. $2.50. Book Union selection for November) parallels *The Conquerors,* Malraux's early, passionate novel of the Chinese civil war, which is the study of a young man becoming a revolutionist, through personal loyalties, conflicts, and scenes of action. *The Conquerors* was an eye-opener to a few young people in Europe, who were then trying to divide romantic beliefs from realities, even as Manuel, the young Spanish leader, in the present book. In *La Condition Humaine* (here called *Man's Fate*), Malraux abandoned that mold and wrote a grandly, almost voluptuously mature philosophic novel, rich in imagination and experience, with unforgettable pages. *Days of Wrath (Le Temps du Mépris)* was a strange refuge from that brilliant scene, melancholy and subjective, less than credible: yet still a study of a revolutionist.

Man's Hope (L'Espoir) contains something of these three. The experience of the revolutionist has ripened: he has become a war chief and he gives us close-ups of men and leaders, and the story of young Manuel, who, during the eight months of the book's course, gradually acquires the art of war. Malraux says here that writers may not immediately produce works of art, but they will produce a revolutionary style, if they have something to say to the men on the firing-line. *Man's Hope* is meant to give to fighters, workers, and organizers in the labor conflict and in the popular front, not merely "the syntax of war" but "its living tongue." And this book is really absorbing, not only for its literary beauty and its story, but because it is a practical manual for anyone interested in political organization: it gets its examples out of the living errors and victories of the present Spanish revolutionary war. It reminds one of some of the best Soviet films, where there are sequences designed to teach war techniques to the audience —methods of attack, the firing of a rifle, the loading of a machine gun. In the early days of the Spanish war, so many mistakes were committed because the government's supporters either had no technical knowledge, or believed in old-fashioned "revolutionary superstitions"; or, like some anarchists, were ready to give noble examples but had no thought of ultimate victory. Malraux's book is as masterly, spectacular, thrilling, and purposive as those Soviet films.

Here is a canvas of a war of liberation: the naive stage of "careless rapture" and the "night filled with fraternity," that "fraternity of the apocalypse" which must be transformed or lose its hope of victory; the tactics of street-fighting, smashing barricades, capturing guns, wildly heroic exploits with a purpose and others done uselessly; errors in defense ("Spain is littered with barricades against warplanes"), in philosophy ("two or three rather pernicious superstitions, for example, the French superstition: The People . . ."), the use of the militia ("no militia will ever defeat a modern army"); the organization of undisciplined troops, the salvaging of a debacle (this is a stirring incident) which ends with the first self-posted guards of the Spanish war; and finally, the disciplining of the government army after the dissemination of small Communist units throughout its battalions. The value of the Communists in this war is striking: "The Communists are disciplined already. . . . In each army unit we have a good many Communists, who themselves keep discipline and make a point of seeing that others observe it too."

Thus Malraux has gone over this period of the war, step by step, and examined it, to find out what was right and what was wrong, and how this war differed from the Russian Revolution and all the nineteenth-century revolutions, so that we will have this twentieth-century lesson, given under all the conditions of modern warfare, to pore over.

For this reason alone the book will be celebrated, and every revolutionary figure, every writer, will study it.

We seem to be living in an age of young masters. The totalitarian and wartime nationalist state seems to crush out all creative writing. But under the bitter and broadening influences of civil war, when every soul is tried, new literature is possible. "How can one make the best of one's life?" asks a character, and is answered, "By converting as wide a range of experience as possible into conscious thought. . . ."

John Heliker

Malraux hides nothing. There is generally a fairly thick and high wall standing between those who have been in active service and commanded men, and those who have not. Malraux, true to his discipline, has thrown a series of rope ladders over this wall, woven painfully out of the diverse threads of his daily experience. "Some writer said, I am as thronged with corpses as an old graveyard. . . . For four months all of us have been thronged with corpses, Scali. . . . The path that leads from moral standards to political activity is strewn with our dead selves. . . ." "You said to me once, it takes more nobility to be a leader of men, than just to be oneself. Because it's harder. Well, I'm becoming less and less *myself* . . . every step I've taken towards greater efficiency, towards becoming a better officer, has estranged me more and more from my fellow man. . . ." "All action is Manichean. . . ." These are the fruits of a man's communion with himself on days of defeat and in fateful impasses. This author is much more than an impressionist, and not a philosopher though he is fond of philosophy; he is a man with an extremely austere sense of duty towards his fellow man and towards his art. If he is so active as a revolutionist, wearing out his strength as he does, going through all the exploits that a fighting air-pilot is likely to, it is partly because of this great sense of duty. He wishes to be "artist and artisan"—and as much as that comprehends in days like these. Malraux is a unique character among the writers of today, and perhaps more than any other is able to illuminate the part we may have to play in a few days or a few years.

There are innumerable scenes flashing on the reader's imagination, often scenes that are "shots" conveyed in one sentence of the author's nervous, exercised prose: a large number of splendid air scenes, particularly: well known scenes from the history of the Spanish war, so vivid with Malraux's hallucinatory vocabulary that the reader gets anxious about the fate of battles decided years ago, waits for "our tanks," almost puts down the book to get up and urge the chiefs to organize. There are theatrical incidents which would make superb movie shots, for example, the "truce" in front of the Alcazar, the firemen racing up burning houses in Madrid and being sniped at from fascist planes, low-flying.

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There are sounds—"a pack of dogs began howling, grotesquely, senselessly, aggressively, as though the world of men had passed away and they were rulers of its desolation"—odors, heat, cold, fog, and mist, powerfully suggestive. Perhaps the finest are those seen from the airman's vantage point.

> For the first time both men grew conscious of the earth's rotation. . . . It seemed to them that they themselves were stationary and the clouds and peaks were wheeling slowly round them. Suddenly at the fringe of a cloudrift, the earth came into view, and two hundred yards or so away a little puff-ball floated past. The Alcazar had opened fire. Space seemed to contract and the bright air faded out as the plane dived below the clouds. Here was man's little world. The Alcazar. . . .

The book ends after a complete warlike organization has been reached on the government side, after the arrival of tanks, anti-tank machine guns, planes, and supplies, in a moment of victory, when the Italians are falling back, abandoning their material.

There is more now than "that spark of poetry in every man" of the day of the apocalypse. "For the first time Manuel was hearing the voice of that which is more awe-inspiring even than the blood of men; more enigmatic than their presence on earth—the infinite possibilities of their destiny. . . ." This theme, which throbs through the book, is the theme of one who must believe in victory.

Malraux has achieved that perfect synthesis and simulacrum of life of which the novel alone is capable, an international, local, and personal history. And the remarkable thing is that although it is rich in philosophical flavors, it was written on the field of action, after work, in the evening: "In the evening," said Malraux, "it gets dark—and I write."

The reader will find it fairly clear that Magnin is, for his purposes, Colonel Malraux himself. A writer who has fought in Spain has said about this character that "the account is not only exact insofar as it goes—including the bombing raids—but Malraux, if anything, has underwritten his own part."

It is not possible, in this space, to discuss Malraux's style, which is peculiar to himself, a lively, pithy, savory modern language with a descriptive genius and a neat way of introducing characters. Some of its virtues shine through the mediocre translation in our hands. The translators, Stuart Gilbert and Alastair Macdonald, have made so bold as to interpret rather than translate, in numerous passages; have given way to picturesque freaks *(e.g.,* instead of Englishing French expressions, like "dynamiteurs," they have turned them into Spanish); not translated at all an unknown word like *sereno;* have made several errors ("the stench of horses" where it should be "of corpses"; "UGT" instead of "UHP" on an automobile, and so on); and for their translation they have used a mixture of American and British vocabularies with a word or two of Paris English thrown in. Some passages have been polished up, towards the end, but absolutely no attempt has been made to give any idea of Malraux's style.

CHRISTINA STEAD.

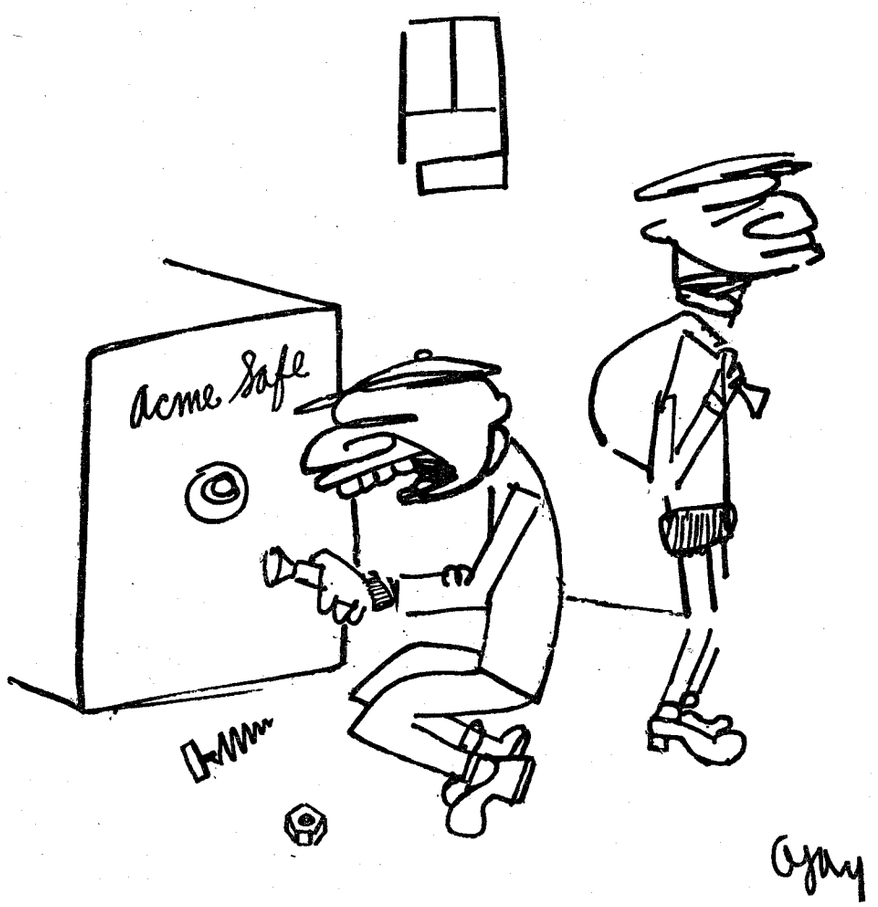
Grafters' Gallery

PUBLIC PLUNDER: A HISTORY OF GRAFT IN AMERICA, *by David Loth. Carrick & Evans. $3.*

IT IS a fable cultivated by many writers that the shadier figures of American politics were merely horrid deviations from Sunday-school rectitude. This emphasis on moral obliquity completely shielded from view the economic atmosphere in which a Schuyler Colfax, a Boss Tweed, or an Albert Fall flourished. It would seem also that the plunderers of the public domain were indeed rare beside the host of upstanding citizens who benefited from government gifts. For a good part of these fictions we are indebted to the muckrakers. They made their clinical observations on the festering sores in municipal politics and fell victim to the gospel of evil and virtue. When Lincoln Steffens, however, discovered that the respectable merchants were tacitly consenting to machine corruption, he altered his understanding to an indictment of the entire system that bred the ethics of plunder politely called business.

Mr. Loth writes in the Steffens tradition. He is not deluded by the pleasant theories of individual wickedness. He knows that the Virginia Colony was not founded by some adventurous spirits eager to glorify the inglorious James I. If the governor who ruled the colony converted it into a private source of aggrandizement his methods were no different from the London gentry whose joint stock company sponsored him. Corruption in the colonies, modified to meet the problems of conquering a rich, wild seaboard, followed the English model. The crown's emissary had chartered powers which he dispensed as favors to those who could pay the price. And when the righteous Lord Bellomont (precursor of the righteous goo-goo forces decades later) tried to prosecute New York's buccaneers he sorrowfully reported to his superiors in London, "In plaine terms I must tell your lordships that I can have nobody prosecuted here that hath ten pieces of eight."

Graft later was a weapon in the industrial struggle against the government for power. The private exploitation of land and natural resources could not obey the concept that the interests of the people were paramount. That would have required an unheard-of selflessness that did not fit in with the industrialist's belief in his God-given right to property and profit. Breath-taking expansion demanded land grants, concessions, and subsidies. These were "purchasable merchandise." "Business wanted to buy favors from the state; politicians wanted to sell. That, in the absence of any deterrent to trade, makes a market." Contributions to campaign funds, market tips, fees (legislators were also lawyers) were part of the pattern of bribery that bestowed on the hungering entrepreneur the riches of an empire. Collis Huntington, in search of railroad



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privileges, spent $500,000 at the congressional sessions during the Grant administration.

The new industrial revolution had unleashed such furies of energy that the slow-moving government bureaucracy could be speeded only through graft. But with the concentration of capital the banker, industrialist, and politician signed a pact among themselves which gave birth to a more subtle setup, that of "honest graft." The scheme eliminated the grossest abuses such as the Crédit Mobilier or the much earlier Yazoo fiasco. The abuses were unnecessary because the money-men were getting the blessings they needed without provoking costly scandal. The method in practice was extremely simple. Pennsylvania manufacturers, for example, controlled votes for which the politicos were more than grateful. Every mining or factory town was invaded on election day by armies of gunmen who coerced workers into voting for candidates who were links in the chain of "honest graft." The political services exchanged for ballots amounted to what Mr. Loth calls "the averted glance." In economic terms it meant tariffs and complete freedom in running business regardless of the social cost. (As the elder Morgan put it—"men owning property should do what they like with it.") Those who were prepared to carry through the bidding of their business masters were rewarded with senatorships, positions in the Cabinet, and not infrequently with the presidency.

That idea synopsizes the story of the Harding administration. The story can be studied as the climax of federal corruption in a business democracy. It embodies in its many ramifications peculation with the consent of responsible officials to fraud justified by law. Harding was the fall boy for the Ohio gang. They had no sooner brought him to the White House than they proceeded to plunder what was left of the public domain, with a deftness that made Jim Fiske and Oakes Ames look like a pair of milkfed calves. Oil was liquid gold and manipulation of federal leases by Cabinet members brought them a nice profit and the government the Teapot Dome scandal. This and the thievery in the Veterans Bureau were the more unsavory episodes in the era of "normalcy." But behind the scenes a diffident, millionaire secretary of the treasury was placing the government at the service of business in a way that made the half-billion-dollar oil scandal seem small change indeed. Uncle Andy Mellon could do without the ordinary inspirations to service—from chorus girls to little black bags of money. His task was chiseling the government of millions in personal taxes; and for the members of his coterie he pushed through legislation relieving income-tax payers above the $66,000 per year bracket. In the files of the Internal Revenue Bureau was a letter to Secretary Mellon from Commissioner David H. Blair: "Pursuant to your request for a memorandum setting forth some of the various ways by which an individual may legally avoid tax, I am pleased to submit the following, which was prepared by a member of the income-tax unit of this bureau." Twelve loopholes were suggested which Uncle Andy adopted. Consider that this sort of embezzlement continued under Coolidge and Hoover, plus their personal contribution of cartels and trade associations, and you have a more or less rounded picture of finance running Washington.

If Mr. Loth's dictionary of blackguards has its faults, I believe they are the faults of looking at history from too narrow an angle. His perspective is warped by the filth at the top so that it not infrequently appears to him that graft is the dynamo of government, if not society. In the capitalist's fight for political power, or the holding of power, graft plays a role that cannot be underrated. But the fight and the graft are themselves reflections of fundamental class conflicts which Mr. Loth glosses over much too quickly. This leads to the most serious failing of the book: minimizing the effects of the labor and farmer movements in their struggle against the grafting hierarchy. Nevertheless, the book should be warmly welcomed. It paints plunderers superbly without making them seem glamorous. It recaptures their times dramatically without romanticizing. As a master of the epigrammatic sentence, Mr. Loth can define a man and a moment so that they bite right into the mind. For once I can agree with a publisher's puff: *"Public Plunder* is a notable addition to our knowledge of this country."

JOHN STUART.

A Marxist on Music

MUSIC AND SOCIETY, *by Elie Siegmeister. Critics Group Series. 25 cents.*

It is astonishing that at this late date the place of music in society and the influence of social forces on its development have been so little studied. Social analysis has in recent years cast new light on the meaning and development of literature and painting, the sciences, technology, religion, and almost every aspect of human culture, yet towards an interpretation of the functions of music in society and its relation to the life of its time, little more than a beginning has been made.

THESE words introduce the timely Critics Group pamphlet *Music and Society* by Elie Siegmeister, a provocative, entertaining, and searchingly analytical treatment of the role of society in the development of music. As one whose whole life has been bound up with this art, who has pondered much on the functions of all the arts, who has created music in the "abstract" as well as in the "functional" sense, this reviewer welcomes as long overdue this challenging contribution to sociological thought. By virtue of its excellent treatment of the various periods of musical development, presented usually from a more or less factual angle, it automatically takes its place beside the two or three similar works in the field of literature, art, and the sciences, and as such should be required reading for all who pretend to any degree of clarification as regards

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the social processes underlying the evolution of music throughout the ages.

The author expresses his principal thesis in the following words: "The history of music is organically and dynamically related to the history of society, from which it cannot be isolated without losing its intelligibility." This theme is expanded and documented with a wealth of illustrations that throw new light on many facts which in the average reader's mind exist for the most part as unrelated scraps of information. For example, how do we account for the transition from the polyphonic period, culminating in Bach, to the flowering of the symphony in Beethoven? Is it adequately explained by the usual accounts of innovations made by certain experimentally minded composers? If so, how can we explain why these same innovators did not prepare the way, shall we say, for the symphonic poem instead of the symphony?

It is clear that without full recognition of external conditions, of the demand for certain types of music, and of the social forces giving rise to such demands, a real understanding of musical evolution is out of the question. Siegmeister has given us invaluable insight into the part played by the church in the Middle Ages, into Monteverde's innovations, into the close correlation of the lives and politics of Mozart, Wagner, and Liszt, for example, with their music—to mention only a few outstanding features.

It is inevitable, however, that no work from Aristotle to Croce, touching on the nature or the function of art in any field, can appear without stirring up a hornets' nest of controversial subject matter, and it goes without saying that Siegmeister's invaluable pamphlet is no exception. We might cite the lively word-battles that have been raging in the Soviet Union over a period of years on the dialectic nature and processes of art in all fields.

The author's failure to give an adequate definition of functionalism is the keynote to certain specious reasoning which occasionally crops up. Functionalism: Is it writing for certain instruments, determined by environmental circumstances? Is it writing to express or reflect political or class alignments? Or is it the projection of an individuality through a particular medium, the communication of an esthetic idea or emotion?

Our author is apparently thumbs-down on the last. For example, in his treatment of Bach he says, "His music was functional to the environment in which he lived. When he had a position as organist, he wrote organ music. . . . The B-Minor Mass . . . written not for the sake of self-expression or out of a desire to create pure art, but as a specific response to the need of his environment" (as if the two motives were mutually exclusive).

One is forced to the conclusion that the author does not consider as functional the providing of emotional satisfaction to a collection of individuals.

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concept still prevails with regard to music, which is still considered as largely a vague, intangible experience, unrelated to all other experiences, whose chief function is to entertain, uplift, provide subjective emotional satisfaction to each individual in his own way."

Yet if individual emotional response has no functional validity, how do we account for the survival of a work into another generation? We find the B-Minor Mass now being performed in concert halls, an environment completely alien to the "functional" one. This masterpiece has far outlived its function in the narrow sense of the word, but because of its inherent worth as music it arouses "subjective emotional satisfaction" in human beings of all creeds and denominations, in other words, functions in terms of its own musical content, as indeed it always has.

Instead of recognizing the complexity of the creative act, the dynamic interplay of psychological and social forces, there is a persistent side-stepping of the role of the ego. To keep to the subject of Bach—we are told that "Bach's church music reveals often a mystical longing for death, which would be incomprehensible in a person of his character and abilities, except when seen as a reflection in the religious sphere of the dissatisfaction with its material conditions of the class to which he belonged, the German middle class."

Is our author unaware of the cruel frustrations of Bach's boyhood or is he unwilling to use the psychoanalytic approach, which might show some connection between these frustrations and his "longing for death"—not to mention many later acts of musical rebellion. In this connection we should remember that both Marx and Engels warned against overemphasizing the social at the expense of the individual, a propensity still to be met with in certain "Marxists" of today, such as Alan Bush, whom Siegmeister quotes.

Owing to his individuality, much of Bach's music actually failed of functioning during his lifetime. True, he wrote for the organ while an organist—but what music! It didn't please the congregation at all; in fact they formed grievance committees about it. His pupils thought so little of his music that they lost his manuscripts. Nobody cared for "experimental" music anyway—imagine writing a fugue in every key! No wonder that Bach for a hundred years after his death existed only in music histories, until his rediscovery by Mendelssohn.

The author admits this element of time-lag in esthetic functioning, but makes no attempt to account for it.

> Social influences do not act in an immediate, direct, simple way. Often the effect is delayed, circuitous, oblique, in most cases a broad effect, felt over a long period of time, not perhaps discernible in one particular instance, but evident in a broad collection of instances. And music just as frequently has as strong an effect on society as the other way around. Often it develops its own momentum and goes off on its own. . . .

To account for this "momentum" one would have to evaluate the role of the individual, which is evidently what the author is at all costs endeavoring to avoid.

These objections merely qualify an otherwise favorable impression of the book as a whole. The main thesis is developed consistently and cumulatively right up to modern times, and in a challenging way. A lot of us composers have been doing a "heap o' thinkin' " about these matters, and it is poetic justice to see some of our thoughts in print for once. What newspaper has ever dared to raise its voice against the mediocre conductor and musician who has dominated New York's musical life for half a century? Siegmeister is fearless in his exposure and analysis of the corruption of our present-day musical life by a perverted economy. For this and for the many other reasons already mentioned, his little book will find many readers, and rightly so.

WALLINGFORD RIEGGER.

Prelude to Changkufeng

RED PLANES FLY EAST, *by Piotr Pavlenko. International Publishers. $2.*

LIKE the recent Soviet film, *If War Comes Tomorrow,* this novel is at once a warning to the fascist powers and a reassurance to the Soviet people that the USSR is prepared to resist and to overcome any attack upon the land of Socialism. Of much greater scope than the film, *Red Planes Fly East* goes back to 1932 for the beginning of its story, to the mobilization of party and Young Communist League members for the great drive to transform the economy of Siberia and to fortify the country against Japanese aggression. The story dramatizes the Bunyanesque-Bolshevik efforts of the new frontiersmen and their families to build cities, to make and transport goods, to create a culture under the hardest of natural conditions, in spite of the internal opposition of spies and wreckers, and under the imminent threat of Japanese invasion.

Melodrama is easily compounded of such material, but Pavlenko, understanding that "great work is great character, revealing itself in cooperatives, in physics, in piscatology, in war or art," gives us not only the blood and thunder of the Far Eastern conquest but the heroism of the men and women who fulfilled that task. There are some forty-odd principal characters, and many of them are superbly drawn types. There is Shottman, the organizer of geological research expeditions, "a man who had distributed himself in enduring dimensions, in wood, in earth, in ores"; Luza, the gray veteran of the Civil War partisan detachments, whose fame was so considerable that he never had time to take up any work; Murusima, the Japanese spy who spent thirty years in Russia preparing the way for his war lords; Shershavin, a Red Army political commissar; Semionovich, regional organizer; Schlegel of the Cheka; and dozens of others of interest: oceanographers, engineers, hunters, airmen, farmers, professors, rank-and-file Communists, dancers, actors, industrial workers.

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In telling of the difficult and passionate job of construction, Pavlenko enriches the story with frequent essays and documentation not essential to the line of movement but exciting in themselves and contributory to a deeper knowledge of Soviet life. As offshoots of the main theme there are sections on different methods of espionage, on the recent history of the revolutionary movement internationally, on transportation between the Ukraine and the Far East, on the uses of oceanography, on the nature of Bolsheviks, on the development of guerrilla warfare, on life in the Arctic.

The last part of the book is projected into the future, or was such a projection at the time it was written, before the fighting occurred this summer between the Soviets and Japan at Changkufeng. Pavlenko foretells an air raid upon Vladivostok by the Japs, followed by large-scale warfare on land and sea. About one-fourth of the book is given to d tailed description of the last desperate attempt of the Rising Sun empire to find a way out of its misfortunes. Pavlenko shows the USSR compelled to begin what it believes will become a struggle for a universal October.

Pavlenko could not but choose to use a panoramic focus to get within his range all the vast area of life. Despite the limitations of the technique, which hardly allows for the full development of character when there are an infinite number to be shown, the novel does not suffer much. Diverse as the multiplicity of scenes and figures is, when viewed as a composite at the close of the novel, there is no impression of confusion or discontinuity. Pavlenko's subject, the Soviet people extending their new world, is realized with a concreteness and immediacy attainable only by a fine craftsman of Socialist understanding.

MILTON MELTZER.

★

Magazines

SOVIET RUSSIA TODAY. *Anniversary Issue. November, 1938. 15 cents.*

Wise readers have been collecting the special November anniversary issues of *Soviet Russia Today*. They are registers of the year's achievements in the Soviet Union in first-hand accounts by observers, invaluable documentary material, and in vivid pictorial record through generous and well selected photographs.

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And even the commercial Broadway theater must respond to this heightened rhythm, this tense pitch of the times. It is no accident that the two most successful plays of the season, the new *Hamlet* and *Abe Lincoln in Illinois,* reverberate with great rhetoric, rolling periods, noble poetry, and enormous themes. Men live history every day. They have an appetite for sweeping, challenging theater played in the grand style.

So Orson Welles' theatrical instinct was right when he picked *Danton's Death* for his first production of the season—and *Waltz in Goose Step* fails because it reduces fascism, and the fight against it, to a drawing-room tragedy of perversion, mania, and bad manners. The rolling periods of the old German play about the French ex-revolutionist should have pulled audiences from their seats—and by the same token, *Waltz in Goose Step* was destined to fall short of the mark because the tragedy of our era cannot be translated into Noel Coward hysteria.

But rhetoric and good intentions are not enough to make a great play. The Mercury Theatre's new production is a great disappointment for two simple reasons: it is dull as ditch water and completely muddled. Unless you're a specialist in the French Revolution, which I'm not, it's practically impossible to figure out what all the guillotining is about. The issues and events of the period are completely obscured by a lot of high-sounding talk. I did my level best to fit the puzzle together, and spent agonized moments trying hastily to recall college history but, frankly, I simply couldn't make head or tail of the story. If Danton drew back from the revolutionary movement after only the first steps had been taken, thereby criminally endangering the whole revolution, Robespierre continued to march forward. But the Mercury Theatre production is neither flesh nor fowl—nor good red herring, either. The sympathies of the audience must shift uneasily from Danton to Robespierre and back again. Did Danton really plot to destroy the republic? The Mercury's Robespierre (and history, incidentally) said he did. Two minutes later Danton is shown talking to a politically harmless whore—which is the extent of the plotting the audience sees. And another thing. Even Danton's love life is inexplicably mixed up. Along toward the middle of the play, after several high-life scenes in brothels, Danton is suddenly shown with a loving wife, whom I took to be a fancy lady in one of the earlier scenes. Why wasn't the good lady jealous? Why did she decide to kill herself when Danton died? I don't think betrayed wives commit suicide over the graves of faithless husbands, not, at least, without good reason.

Unfortunately I haven't read the original *Danton's Tod* so I can't say whether the Mercury Theatre's production brings some order out of complete confusion, or whether the remarkable lighting, offstage noises, bare stage, trap doors, and elevator system serve only to further muddle the proceedings. The production, like every Mercury Theatre production, is startling and provocative. I have an uneasy feeling, however, that Mr. Welles is using a heavy hand in *Danton's Death.* Certainly there are too many trap doors—actors pop up and down from every corner of the stage and I am not being whimsical when I say that by the middle of the play the audience starts to worry itself sick for fear Robespierre will take one step too many on the elevator platform and break his neck as he tumbles into one of the gaping holes on the stage. And the whole production is definitely too dark. Stages ought to be light enough to get a good look at the actors, and the pitch blackness in the house makes the theater-goer uneasy.

The cast for *Danton's Death* is admirable. Vladimir Sokoloff, one of my favorite actors, does a fine Robespierre and Martin Gabel is splendid as Danton. The entire supporting cast turn in notable performances and no other theater in town is currently displaying such a group of talented actors and actresses.

Soriano

Marc Blitzstein did the incidental music, which I liked enormously. "Christine" is a fine song and ought to be heard frequently around town.

Danton's Death fails because its heroic rhetoric doesn't make sense. *Waltz in Goose Step* is unsatisfactory because its author, Oliver H. P. Garrett, attacks fascism with spitballs rather than siege guns. The play revolves around the lives of a group of fascist leaders, and reaches its climax in a palace revolt engineered by the Leader's right-hand man to save his own skin. *Waltz in Goose Step* proves that fascist leaders are perverts, sadists, ignorant maniacs, and hysterical fools. And it adds that fascist propaganda is compounded out of a cynical play on the hopes and fears of innocently misled people. But this is not enough to make either a good play or a moving anti-fascist document. Against the tragic backdrop of Czechoslovakia the petty melodrama of *Waltz in Goose Step* fades to triviality.

For the truth of the matter is that it doesn't really matter very much whether Goering is a dope fiend or Hitler's sex life is peculiar. Perversion is unpleasant, but not very important. The private lives of fascist leaders may be dull and dirty, but the anti-fascist movement cannot center its attacks on the vicious manners and abnormal appetites of Nazi rulers. Mr. Garrett's mistake is not in lack of understanding but in emphasis. The dialogue in his play indicates that he knows the origin of fascism—the greed of monopoly capital. Many of the lines show that he comprehends the effect of fascism—the destruction of culture and human dignity. But it is not enough to have a decadent actress and a perverted fascist mourn the destruction of Art. Nor is it compelling to put a bereaved Jewish woman on the stage and let her weep for the misfortunes of her race.

Mr. Garrett's drama fails because he elects to have it spotlight the private weaknesses of fascist leaders. He has no opportunity to put either the fascist leader-makers, or the anti-fascist fighters, on the stage. His play is all petty villainy. The only relief from the monotonous procession of vicious characters across the stage is a Communist who appears for a moment to indicate, but merely indicate, the anti-fascist forces offstage. I cannot help but think, after reflecting on *Waltz in Goose Step,* that the great anti-fascist play of our time will have to be written around a group

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of characters fighting fascism, rather than around the careers of the fascist leaders themselves.

The play, however, is well worth seeing, if only for the beautiful performance of Henry Oscar as the piano-playing pervert who, in the end, gets shot by his own valet. The rest of the cast do well enough with the impossibly melodramatic situations.

RUTH MCKENNEY.

School Directory

THE U. S. Army had better beware of Hollywood. Two new pictures, *Brother Rat* and *Touchdown, Army,* masquerading under the innocent themes of love and baseball, and love and football, respectively, seem to me to be dangerously near to seditious. They hold the army up to ridicule. The subversive directors in each case have used the technique of emphasizing the traditional rote of military academy life so heavily that the spectator is moved to dedicate his progeny to rabid pacifism.

Brother Rat concerns the Virginia Military Institute, of which Stonewall Jackson once said, "The Virginia Military Institute will be heard from today." The grateful academy immediately capitalized these words and had them graven on the pedestal of an equestrian bronze that stands on the campus. Around this hallowed spot cadets are wont to gather when the sun paints his golden bars in the west, there to exchange confidences about the day's drill, their affairs of the heart, and often, it is rumored, to speak in hushed tones of one of their number who has been caught cheating at "exams." Reader, do not be too harsh with these youths; remember growing boys are not always the saints we'd like them to be. How three of these wholesome lads, together with a comical plebe whom the upperclassmen are fond of hazing, meet some young ladies of their own age begins a story that will put the fan on the edge of his seat. There the fan will hesitate for a moment and then get up and go home.

Touchdown, Army crackles with innovations. First, the role of the conceited quarterback is not filled by Lew Ayres but by Robert Cummings; second, the star player is not kidnaped on the eve of the big game but merely confined to his quarters for cribbing at a quiz; third, there are not ten scenes in which the fresh plebe is addressed as "Mr. Ducrot," "Mr. Dumbjohn," "Mr. Dumbgod," and the rest of the Dumb family—but thirty. Making the best of these derelictions, Director Kurt Neumann has stuffed the old cadaver full of live direction and a very funny satirical scene involving Raymond Hatton as a bogus Civil War veteran who reenacts the Battle of Shiloh by maneuvering a roomful of cadets and their girls.

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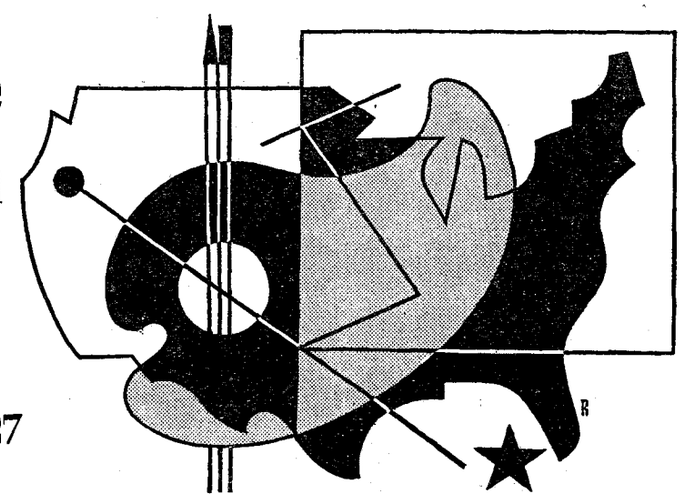

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heavy budget, the expert services of Tess Slesinger and Richard Sherman on the script, John Brahm on the direction, and a fine cast of junior players led by Anne Shirley and Nan Grey, is the Criterion's *Girls' School.* Miss Slesinger is palpably saying something about the snobbery of girls' finishing schools that she has earnestly wanted to say for some time. These genteel factories for wellbred breeders and cocktail mixers get a deft and satirical going over from the script writers. They follow a poor girl (Anne Shirley) who is obliged to earn her way by cataloguing in the library and snitching on the other girls in her thankless position of a "monitor." She follows her painful duty in the case of a rich girl, Nan Grey, who stays out all night on the hockey field listening to her boy friend's poetry. For this she earns the cruel hatred of the little snobs from the big estates, culminating in a trial before the student government. This scene is one of those rarest things in college movies—a true and delicious appreciation for the shams of undergraduate life. We've had a million football games between Sanford and State in the films, but scarcely ever a real incident from the campus. Paramount should press this picture in college towns for the new, wide-awake generation of students who will like its honesty.

SIGNS AND PORTENTS from the West indicate a hard winter by the film fireside. Hollywood's heap o' livin' is mounting rapidly with several family series like the Hardys, domestic opera like *You Can't Take It With You,* and now a caddish family in *The Young in Heart,* entered at the Music Hall. How a charming tribe of chiselers surround a trusting old lady in order to be remembered in her will, and how they succumb to the innocence of their victim, is the simple story. But the treatment, half satiric and half bathetic, creates an unhappy conflict of mood. After a brilliant introduction describing the Carleton family, done almost with the relish of René Clair, the film is reduced to run-of-the-mill heart-throb when the old lady's wiles begin to work.

Minnie Dupree, as gentle old Miss Fortune, should win herself an academy reward for her screen debut at the age of sixty-two. The role allows her to get as close to genuine acting as Hollywood character parts afford. What we have over and above what the daily reviewers call "poignancy" is an understanding of a shy, lonely old spinster's character that is Miss Dupree's own remarkable effect. She is denied a real triumph by false notes in the character drawing; weepy moments that used to be underscored in the silent days with sad violins from the pit. Roland Young and Billie Burke, as the amoral Carletons, are appropriately cast, but Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Janet Gaynor, as the junior Carletons, do not have the touch.

The Young in Heart is well handled, but acid doesn't mix with molasses.

JAMES DUGAN.

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Progressive Sculptors

THE Sculptors Guild exhibition, at the Brooklyn Museum till November 27, is the best news regarding contemporary American sculpture for many a month. Almost threescore members are represented by something over a hundred pieces, in all manners and materials. The total effect is vitality and direction, of a growing art.

This is due, without question, to the fact that the Sculptors Guild represents a democratic union of progressive sculptors to promote the growth of sculpture in America. There is no paternalism involved, no benevolent gesture of a patron, but the sincere desire of the workers in the medium to discover what ails them and to cure the disease. For certainly American sculpture has been ailing badly, infected with mannerisms and almost archeological habits of thought. Now, however, if the Brooklyn Museum exhibition may be taken as a criterion, the patient is not cured but very much alive and kicking.

Nothing as violent as a kick is to be noticed in the 1938 annual exhibition of contemporary American painting, at the Whitney Museum of American Art till December 11. Over a hundred oils have been assembled by the museum's long-standing invitation method. Though there is much competent, and some excellent, painting included, the uncoordinated quality of the exhibition as a whole may be taken as ammunition by those who argue for "theme" exhibitions. The effect of lack of unity is without question due to the museum's laissez-faire method of selection.

S. A. Lipton is having his first one-man show of sculpture, at the ACA Gallery till November 12. A fairly young man, who has earned his living in one of the professions, his would seem to be a natural talent. For, though his treatment of surface grows a little monotonous, his sense of plastic volumes is sure and instinctive. In only one of the eighteen pieces exhibited did one feel a false note, in *Barricades,* where the hand grenade of one soldier is not separated actually or psychologically from the head of the soldier behind him. However, the sculptures as a group have major virtues. They do not defy the laws of their being, that is, they stand firmly on the ground, even when as in *May Day* the movement of the figures is resolutely forward. Another virtue is the great sense of human suffering they arouse. It is a quality like that of Käthe Kollwitz's graphic art, noble and inspiring, making the beholder vow that the causes of such suffering shall cease.

"The Ten," including Ben-Zion, Ilya Bolotowsky, Adolph Gottlieb, John Graham, Louis Harris, Earl Kerkam, Ralph M. Rosenborg, Marcus Rothkowitz, Louis Schanker, and Joseph Solman, are showing at the Mercury Galleries a group exhibition entitled "The Ten: Whitney-Dissenters." Though the show could not be seen before these notes were written, perhaps it offers the answer to the plaint above? ELIZABETH NOBLE.

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